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THE

# MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR;

A COMEDY,

*Written by*

*SHAKSPEARE;*

AND

REVISED BY

J. P. KEMBLE, Esq.

LONDON:

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## *DRAMATIS PERSONÆ*

| | AT DRURY-LANE. | AT COVENT-GARDEN. |
|---|---|---|
| | *MEN.* | |
| Sir John Falſtaff, | Mr. PALMER, | Mr. FAWCETT, |
| Fenton, | Mr. TRUEMAN, | Mr. TOMS, |
| Shallow, | Mr. WALDRON, | |
| Slender, | Mr. RUSSELL, | Mr. KNIGHT, |
| Mr. Page, | Mr. PACKER, | Mr. MACREADY, |
| Mr. Ford, | Mr. WROUGHTON, | Mr. POPE, |
| Sir Hugh Evans, | Mr. DODD, | Mr. TOWNSEND, |
| Dr. Caius, | Mr. WEWITZER, | Mr. MURRAY, |
| Hoſt of the Garter, | Mr. MOODY, | |
| Bardolph, | Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH, | |
| Piſtol, | Mr. R. PALMER, | |
| Nym, | Mr. WEBB, | |
| Robin, | Maſter KEAN, | |
| Simple, | Mr. BURTON, | Mr. SIMMONS. |
| | *WOMEN.* | |
| Mrs. Page, | Miſs POPE, | Mrs. MATTOCKS, |
| Mrs. Ford, | Miſs FARREN, | Mrs. POPE, |
| Mrs. Anne Page, | Miſs HEARD, | Miſs MANSEL, |
| Mrs. Quickly, | Mrs. HOPKINS. | Mrs. DAVENPORT. |

# MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

## *ACT I.—SCENE I.*

BEFORE PAGE'S HOUSE.

*Enter* Shallow, Slender, and Evans.

*Sha.* SIR Hugh, perſuade me not: I will make a Star-chamber matter of it: if he were twenty Sir John Falſtaffs, he ſhall not abuſe Robert Shallow, eſquire.

*Sle.* In the county of Gloſter, juſtice of peace, and *coram.*

*Sha.* Ay, couſin Slender, and *cuſtalorum.*

*Sle.* Ay, and *ratalorum* too; and a gentleman born, maſter parſon; who writes himſelf *armigero*; in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, *armigero.*

*Sha.* Ay, that we do; and have done any time theſe three hundred years.

*Sle.* All his ſucceſſors, gone before him, have done't; and all his anceſtors, that come after him, may: they may give the dozen white luces in their coat.

*Sha.* It is an old coat.

*Eva.* The dozen white louſes do become an old coat well; it agrees well, paſſant: it is a familiar beaſt to man, and ſignifies—love.

*Sle.* I may quarter, coz.

*Sha.* You may by marrying.

*Eva.* It is marring, indeed, if he quarter it.

*Sha.* Not a whit.

*Eva.* Yes, py'r-lady; if he has a quarter of your coat, there is but three ſkirts for yourſelf, in my ſimple conjectures: but that is all one: If ſir John Falſtaff have committed diſparagements unto you, I will be glad to do my benevolence, to make atonements and compromiſes between you,

*Sha.* Ha! o'my life, if I were young again, the ſword ſhould end it.

*Eva.* It is petter that friends is the ſword, and end it: and there is alſo another device in my prain, which, per-adventure,

prings goot diſcretions with it: there is Anne Page, which is daughter to maſter George Page, which is pretty virginity.

*Sle.* Miſtreſs Anne Page? ſhe has brown hair, and ſpeaks ſmall like a woman.

*Eva.* It is that very perſon for all the 'orld, as juſt as you will deſire; and ſeven hundred pounds of monies, and gold and ſilver, is her grandſire, upon his death's bed, give, when ſhe is able to overtake ſeventeen years old: it were a goot motion, if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and deſire a marriage between maſter Abraham and miſtreſs Anne Page.

*Sle.* Did her grandſire leave her ſeven hundred pounds?

*Eva.* Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

*Sha.* I know the young gentlewoman; ſhe has good gifts.

*Eva.* Seven hundred pounds, and poſſibilities, is good gifts.

*Sha.* Well, let us ſee honeſt maſter Page. Is Falſtaff there?

*Eva.* Shall I tell you a lie? I do deſpiſe a liar as I do deſpiſe one that is falſe; or as I deſpiſe one that is not true. The knight, ſir John, is there; and, I beſeech you, be ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the door *(Knocks)* for maſter Page. What, hoa! pleſs your houſe here!

*Enter* Page.

*Pag.* Who's there?

*Eva.* Here is your friend, and juſtice Shallow: and here is young maſter Slender; that, peradventures, ſhall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

*Pag.* I am glad to ſee your worſhips well: I thank you for my veniſon, maſter Shallow.

*Sha.* Maſter Page, I am glad to ſee you; Much good do it your good heart! I wiſh'd your veniſon better; it was ill kill'd:—How doth good miſtreſs Page?—and I love you always with my heart, la; with my heart.

*Pag.* Sir, I thank you; I am glad to ſee you, good maſter Slender.

*Sha.* Is ſir John Falſtaff here?

*Pag.* Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good office between you.

*Eva.* It is ſpoke as a Chriſtians ought to ſpeak.

*Sha.* He hath wrong'd me, maſter Page.

*Pag.* Sir, he doth in ſome ſort confeſs it.

*Sha.* If it be confeſs'd, it is not redreſs'd; is not that ſo, maſter Page? He hath wrong'd me; indeed, he hath; at a word

word he hath; believe me; Robert Shallow, eſquire, ſaith, he is wrong'd.

*Pag.* Here comes ſir John.

*Enter* Falſtaff, Robin, Bardolph, Nym, *and* Piſtol

*Fal.* Now, maſter Shallow, you'll complain of me to the king?

*Sha.* Knight, you have beaten my men, kill'd my deer, and broke open my lodge.

*Fal.* But not kiſs'd your keeper's daughter?

*Sha.* Tut, a pin! this ſhall be anſwer'd.

*Fal.* I will anſwer it ſtraight;—I have done all this:—That is now anſwer'd.

*Sha.* The council ſhall know this.

*Fal.* 'Twere better for you if 'twere known in counſel; you'll be laugh'd at.

*Eva.* *Pauca verba*, Sir John; good worts.

*Fal.* Good worts! good cabbage;—Slender, I broke your head: What matter have you againſt me?

*Sle.* Marry, ſir, I have matter in my head againſt you, and againſt your coney-catching raſcals, Bardolph, Nym, and Piſtol; they carried me to the tavern, made me drunk, and afterwards pick'd my pocket.

*Bar.* You Banbury cheeſe!

*Sle.* Ay, it is no matter.

*Pif.* How now, Mephoſtophilus.

*Sle.* Ay, it is no matter.

*Nym*, Slice, I ſay! ſlice! that's my humour.

*Sle.* Where's Simple, my man?—can you tell, couſin?

*Eva.* Peace: I pray you! Now let us underſtand: There is three umpires in this matter, as I underſtand: that is—maſter Page, *fidelicet*, maſter Page; and there is myſelf, *fidelicet*, myſelf; and the three party is, laſtly and finally, mine hoſt of the Garter.

*Pag.* We three, to hear it, and end it between them.

*Eva.* Fery goot: I will make a prief of it in my note-book; and we will afterwards 'ork upon the cauſe, with as great diſcreetly as we can.

*Fal.* Piſtol,——

*Pif.* He hears with ears.

*Eva.* What phraſe is this, *He hears with ear?* Why, it is affectations.

*Fal.* Piſtol, did you pick maſter Slender's purſe?

*Sle.* Ay, by theſe gloves, did he (or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again elſe), of ſeven groats in mill-ſixpences, and two Edward ſhovel-boards, that coſt me two ſhillings and two-pence a-piece of Yead Miller, by theſe gloves.

*Fal.* Is this true, Piſtol?

*Eva.* No; it is falſe, if it is a pick-purſe.

*Piſ.* Ha, thou mountain-foreigner!—Sir John, and maſter mine,
I combat challenge of this latten bilboe:
Word of denial in thy labras here;
Word of denial: froth and ſcum, thou ly'ſt.

*Sle.* By theſe gloves, then 'twas he.

*Nym.* Be avis'd, ſir, and paſs good humours: I will ſay, *marry trap*, with you, if you run the nuthook's humour on me; that is the very note of it.

*Sle.* By this hat then, he in the red face had it: for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an aſs.

*Fal.* What ſay you, Scarlet and John?

*Bar.* Why, ſir, for my part, I ſay, the gentleman had drunk himſelf out of his five ſentences.

*Eva.* It is his five ſenſes: fie, what the ignorance is!

*Bar.* And being fap, ſir, was, as they ſay, caſhier'd; and ſo concluſions paſs'd the careires.

*Sle.* Ay, you ſpake in Latin then too; but 'tis no matter: I'll never be drunk whilſt I live again, but in honeſt, civil, company, for this trick; if I be drunk, I'll be drunk with thoſe that have the fear of Heaven, and not with drunken knaves.

*Eva.* So Heaven 'udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

*Fal.* You hear all theſe matters deny'd, gentlemen; you hear it.

*Enter* Anne Page *with Wine*; *Mrs.* Ford, *and Mrs.* Page.

*Pag.* Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within. [*Exit* Anne.

*Sle.* O heaven! this is miſtreſs Anne Page?

*Pag.* How now, miſtreſs Ford?

*Fal.* Miſtreſs Ford, by my troth you are very well met: by your leave, good miſtreſs.

*Pag.* Wife, bid theſe gentlemen welcome:—Come, we have

have a hot veniſon paſty to dinner; come, gentlemen, I hope we ſhall drink down all unkindneſs.

[*Exeunt all but* Shallow, Slender, *and* Evans.

*Sle.* I had rather than forty ſhillings, I had my book of ſongs and ſonnets here:——

*Enter* Simple.

How now, Simple? where have you been? I muſt wait on myſelf, muſt I? You have not the book of riddles about you, have you?

*Sim.* Book of riddles! why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake upon Allhallowmas laſt, a fortnight afore Michaelmas?

*Sha.* Come, coz; come coz; we ſtay for you. A word with you, coz; marry, this, coz: there is, as 'twere, a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off by ſir Hugh here;—do you underſtand me?

*Sle.* Ay, ſir, you ſhall find me reaſonable; if it be ſo, I ſhall do that that is reaſon.

*Sha.* Nay, but underſtand me.

*Sle.* So I do, ſir.

*Eva.* Give ear to his motions, maſter Slender: I will deſcription the matter to you, if you be capacity of it.

*Sle.* Nay, I will do, as my couſin Shallow ſays: I pray you, pardon me: he's a Juſtice of peace in his country, ſimple though I ſtand here.

*Eva.* But that is not the queſtion; the queſtion is concerning your marriage.

*Sha.* Ay, there's the point, Sir.

*Eva.* Marry, is it; the very point of it; to miſtreſs Anne Page.

*Sle.* Why, if it be ſo, I will marry her, upon any reaſonable demands.

*Eva.* But can you affection the 'oman? let us command to know that of your mouth, or of your lips; for divers philſophers hold, that the lips is parcel of the mouth;—therefore, preciſely, can you carry your good-will to the maid?

*Sha.* Couſin Abraham Slender, can you love her?

*Sle.* I hope, ſir,—I will do, as it ſhall become one that would do reaſon.

*Eva.* Nay, you muſt ſpeak poſſitable, if you can carry her your deſires towards her.

*Sha.*

*Sha.* That you muſt: will you, upon good dowry, marry her?

*Sle.* I will do a greater thing than that, upon your requeſt, couſin, in any reaſon.

*Sha.* Nay, conceive me, conceive me, ſweet coz; what I do is to pleaſure you, coz: can you love the maid?

*Sle.* I will marry her, ſir, at your requeſt; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet heaven may decreaſe it upon better acquaintance, when we are marry'd, and have more occaſion to know one another: I hope upon familiarity will grow more contempt: but if you ſay, *marry her*, I will marry her, that I am freely diſſolved, and diſſolutely.

*Eva.* It is a very diſcretion anſwer; ſave the faul' is in the 'ort diſſolutely: the 'ort is, according to our meaning, reſolutely;—his meaning is good.

*Sha.* Ay, I think my couſin meant well.

*Sle.* Ay, or elſe I would I might be hanged, la.

*Enter* Anne Page.

*Sha.* Here comes fair miſtreſs Anne:—Would I were young for your ſake, miſtreſs Anne!

*Ann.* The dinner is on the table; my father deſires your worſhip's company.

*Sha.* I will wait on him, fair miſtreſs Anne.

*Exit* Shallow.

*Eva.* Od's pleſſed will! I will not be abſence at the grace. *Exit* Evans.

*Ann.* Will't pleaſe your worſhip to come in, ſir?

*Sle.* No, I thank you, forſooth, heartily; I am very well.

*Ann.* The dinner attends you, ſir.

*Sle.* I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forſooth:—Go, ſirrah, for all you are my man, go, wait upon my couſin Shallow. *Exit* Simple.
A juſtice of peace ſometime may be beholden to his friend for a man:—I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead: but what though? yet I live like a poor gentleman born.

*Ann.* I may not go in without your worſhip: they will not ſit till you come.

*Sle.* I'faith, I'll eat nothing: I thank you as much as though I did.

*Ann.*

*Ann.* I pray you, ſir, walk in.

*Sle.* I had rather walk here, I thank you: I bruis'd my ſhin the other day with playing at ſword and dagger with a maſter of fence, three veneys for a diſh of ſtew'd prunes; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the ſmell of hot meat ſince.—Why do your dogs bark ſo? be there bears i' the town?

*Ann.* I think there are, ſir; I heard them talk'd of.

*Sle.* I love the ſport well; but I ſhall as ſoon quarrel at it as any man in England;—you are afraid if you ſee the bear looſe, are you not?

*Ann.* Ay, indeed, ſir.

*Sle.* That's meat and drink to me now: I have ſeen Sackerſon looſe twenty times, and have taken him by the chain: but, I warrant you, the women have ſo cry'd and ſhriek'd at it, that it paſs'd:—but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favour'd rough things.

*Enter* Page.

*Pag.* Come, gentle maſter Slender, come; we ſtay for you.

*Sle.* I'll eat nothing, I thank you, ſir.

*Pag.* By cock and pye, you ſhall not chooſe, ſir; come, come.

*Sle.* Nay, pray you, lead the way.

*Pag.* Come on, ſir.

*Sle.* Miſtreſs Anne, yourſelf ſhall go firſt.

*Ann.* Not I, ſir, pray you, keep on.

*Sle.* Truly, I will not go firſt; truly-la: I will not do you that wrong.

*Ann.* I pray you, ſir.

*Sle.* I'll rather be unmannerly, than troubleſome: you do yourſelf wrong, indeed-la.

*Exeunt.*

SCENE

## SCENE II.

A ROOM IN PAGE'S HOUSE.

*Enter* Evans *and* Simple.

*Eva.* GO your ways, and aſk of Dr. Caius' houſe which is the way: and there dwells one miſtreſs Quickly, which is in the manner of his nurſe, or his dry nurſe, or his cook, or his laundry, his waſher, and his wringer.

*Sim.* Well, ſir.

*Eva.* Nay, it is petter yet:—give her this letter; for it is a 'oman that altogether's acquaintance with miſtreſs Anne Page; and the letter is, to deſire and require her to ſolicit your maſter's deſires to miſtreſs Anne Page: I pray you, be gone. *Exit* Simple.

I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheeſe to come. [*Exit.*

## SCENE III.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

*Enter* Falſtaff *and* Hoſt.

*Fal.* MINE hoſt of the Garter,—

*Hoſt.* What ſays my bully-rook? ſpeak ſcholarly and wiſely.

*Fal.* Truly, mine hoſt, I muſt turn away ſome of my followers.

*Hoſt.* Diſcard, bully Hercules; caſhier: let them wag; trot, trot.

*Fal.* I ſit at ten pounds a-week.

*Hoſt.* Thou'rt an emperor, Cæſar, Keiſar, and Pheezar. I will entertain Bardolph; he ſhall draw, he ſhall tap: ſaid I well, bully Hector?

*Fal.* Do ſo, good mine hoſt.

*Hoſt.* I have ſpoke; let him follow: let me ſee him froth and lime: I am at a word. [*Exit* Hoſt.

*Fal.* I am glad, I am ſo acquit of this tinder-box; his thefts were too open: his filching was like an unſkilful finger, he kept not time.

*Enter*

*Enter* Piſtol, Nym, *and* Robin.

*Fal.* Which of you know Ford of this town?

*Pis.* I ken the wight; he is of ſubſtance good.

*Fal.* My honeſt lads, I will tell you what I am about.

*Pis.* Two yards, and more.

*Fal.* No quips now, Piſtol: indeed, I am in the waiſt two yards about: but I am now about no waſte: I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife; I ſpy entertainment in her; ſhe diſcourſes, ſhe carves, ſhe gives the leer of invitation: I can conſtrue the action of her familiar ſtyle; and the hardeſt voice of her behaviour, to be Engliſh'd rightly, is, *I am Sir John Falſtaff's.*

*Pis.* He hath ſtudied her well, and tranſlated her well; out of honeſty into Engliſh.

*Fal.* Now, the report goes, ſhe has all the rule of her huſband's purſe; ſhe hath legions of angels.

*Nym.* The humour riſes; it is good: humour me the angels.

*Fal.* I have writ me here a letter to her; and here another to Page's wife; who even now gave me good eyes too, examined my parts with moſt judicious eyliads; ſometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, ſometimes my portly belly.

*Pis.* Then did the ſun on dung-hill ſhine.

*Nym.* I thank thee for that humour.

*Fal.* O, ſhe did ſo courſe o'er my exteriors with ſuch a greedy intention, that the appetite of her eye did ſeem to ſcorch me up like a burning glaſs! She bears the purſe too; ſhe is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheater to them both, and they ſhall be exchequers to me; they ſhall be my Eaſt and Weſt Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go, bear thou this letter to miſtreſs Page; and thou this to miſtreſs Ford: we will thrive, lads, we will thrive.

*Pis.* Shall I ſir Pandarus of Troy become,
And by my ſide wear ſteel? then Lucifer take all!

*Nym.* I will run no baſe humour: here, take the humour letter; I will keep the 'haviour of reputation.

*Fal.* Hold, ſirrah, bear you theſe letters tightly;
Sail like my pinnace to theſe golden ſhores.

*Exit* Robin.

Rogues, hence, avaunt! vaniſh like hail-ſtones, go;
Trudge, plod, away, o' the hoof; ſeek ſhelter, pack!

Falſtaff will learn the humour of this age,
French thrift, you rogues; myſelf, and ſkirted page.
*Exit* Falſtaff.

*Nym.* I have operations in my head, which be humours of revenge.

*Pis.* Wilt thou revenge?

*Nym.* By welkin and her ſtar!

*Pis.* With wit or ſteel?

*Nym.* With both the humours, I:
I will diſcuſs the humour of this love to Page.

*Pis.* And I to Ford ſhall eke unfold,
How Falſtaff, varlet vile,
His dove will prove, his gold will hold,
And his ſoft couch defile.

*Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV.

A ROOM IN DOCTOR CAIUS'S HOUSE.

*Enter* Mrs. Quickly *with a letter, and* Simple.

*Qui.* WHAT; John Rugby!—
*Enter* Rugby.
I pray thee, go to the caſement, and ſee if you can ſee my maſter, maſter doctor Caius, coming; if he do, i'faith, and find any body in the houſe, here will be an old abuſing of the king's Engliſh.

*Rug.* I'll go watch.

*Qui.* Go; and we'll have a poſſet for't ſoon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a ſea-coal fire.
*Exit* Rugby.
An honeſt, willing, kind fellow, as ever ſervant ſhall come in houſe withall; and, I warrant you, no tell-tale, nor no breed-bate: his worſt fault is, that he is given to prayer; he is ſomething peeviſh that way: but no body but has his fault;—but let that paſs. Peter Simple, you ſay your name is?

*Sim.* Ay, for fault of a better.

*Qui.* And maſter Slender's your maſter?

*Sim.* Ay, forſooth.

*Qui.* A ſoftly-ſprighted man, is he not?

*Sim.* Ay, forſooth: but he is as tall a man of his hands, as any is between this and his head; he hath fought with a warrener.

*Qui.*

*Qui.* How say you?—oh, I should remember him; Does he not hold up his head, as it were, and strut in his gait?

*Sim.* Yes, indeed does he.

*Qui.* Well, heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell master parson Evans I will do what I can for your master: Anne is a good girl, and I wish——

*Enter* Rugby.

*Rug.* Out, alas! here comes my master.

*Exit* Rugby.

*Qui.* We shall all be shent: run in here, good young man; go into this closet.

*Shuts* Simple *in the closet.*

He will not stay long.—What, John Rugby! John, what, John, I say!—Go, John, go inquire for my master; I doubt he be not well, that he comes not home:—*and down, down, a-down-a,* &c. [*Sings.*

*Enter* Caius.

*Cai.* Vat is you sing? I do not like dese toys; pray you, go and vetch me in my closet *un boitier verd*; a box, a green-a-box: do intend vat I speak? a green-a box.

*Qui.* Ay, forsooth, I'll fetch it you.

I am glad he went not in himself: if he had found the young man, he would have been horn-mad.

*Exit* Quickly.

*Cai.* *Fe, fe, fe, fe! ma foi, il fait fort chaud. Je m'en vais à la Cour,—la grande affaire.*

*Enter* Quickly.

*Qui.* Is it this, sir?

*Cai.* *Ouy*; *mettez le au mon* pocket; *depêchez*, quickly:—Vere is dat knave Rugby?

*Qui.* What, John Rugby! John!

*Enter* Rugby.

*Rug.* Here, sir.

*Cai.* You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby: come, take-a your rapier, and come after my heel to the court.

*Rug.* 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

*Cai.* By my trot, I tarry too long.——Od's me! *Qu'ay j'oublié?* dere is some simples in my closet, dat I vill not for de varld I shall leave behind. *Exit* Caius.

*Qui.* Ay me! he'll find the young man there, and be mad.

Caius *within.*

*Cai.* O *diable, diable!* vat is in my cloſet?—Villainy! *Larron!* Rugby, my rapier.

*Enter* Caius *pulling* Simple *out of the cloſet.*

*Qui.* Good maſter, be content.

*Cai.* Verefore ſhall I be content-a?

*Qui.* The young man is an honeſt man.

*Cai.* Vat ſhall de honeſt man do in my cloſet? dere is no honeſt man dat ſhall come in my cloſet.

*Qui.* I beſeech you, be not ſo flegmatic; hear the truth of it. He came of an errand to me from parſon Hugh.

*Cai.* Vell.

*Sim.* Ay, forſooth, to deſire her to——

*Qui.* Peace, I pray you.

*Cai.* Peace-a your tongue:—Speak-a your tale.

*Sim.* To deſire this honeſt gentlewoman, your maid, to ſpeak a good word to miſtreſs Anne Page for my maſter in the way of marriage.

*Qui.* This is all, indeed-la; but I'll never put my finger in the fire, and need not.

*Cai.* Sir Hugh ſend-a you?—Rugby, *baillez* me ſome paper: tarry you a little while.

*Exeunt* Caius *and* Rugby.

*Qui.* I am glad he is ſo quiet: if he had been thoroughly moved, you ſhould have heard him ſo loud, and ſo melancholy;—but notwithſtanding, man, I'll do your maſter what good I can: and the very yea and the no is, the French Doctor, my maſter,—I may call him my maſter, look you, for I keep his houſe; and I waſh, wring, brew, bake, ſcour, dreſs meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myſelf,—

*Sim.* 'Tis a great charge, to come under one body's hand.

*Qui.* Are you avis'd o' that? you ſhall find it a great charge: and to be up early, and down late;—but notwithſtanding (to tell you in your ear; I would have no words of it;) my maſter himſelf is in love with miſtreſs Anne Page; but, notwithſtanding that,—I know Anne's mind,——that's neither here nor there.

*Enter* Caius *and* Rugby.

*Cai.* You jack'nape; give-a dis letter to ſir Hugh; by gar, it is a ſhallenge; I vill cut his throat in de park; and I vill teach a ſcurvy jack-a-nape prieſt to meddle or make:—you may be gone; it is not good you tarry here.

*Exit* Simple.

*Qui.*

*Qui.* Alas, he ſpeaks but for his friend.

*Cai.* It is no matter-a for dat:——do not you tell-a me dat I ſhall have Anne Page for myſelf?—by gar, I vill kill de jack prieſt; and I vill appoint mine hoſt of *de Jarterre* to meaſure our weapon:——by gar, I vill myſelf have Anne Page.

*Qui.* Sir, the maid loves you, and all ſhall be well: we muſt give folks leave to prate.

*Cai.* Rugby, come to the court vit me;—By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I ſhall turn your head out of door:—Follow my heels, Rugby.

*Exeunt* Caius *and* Rugby.

*Qui.* You ſhall have An Fool's head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that: never a woman in Windſor knows more of Anne's mind than I do; nor can do more than I do with her, I thank heaven.

Fenton *without.*

*Fen.* Who's within there, ho?

*Qui.* Who's there, I trow?

*Enter* Fenton.

*Fen.* How now, good woman; how doſt thou?

*Qui.* The better that it pleaſes your good worſhip to aſk.

*Fen.* What news? how does pretty miſtreſs Anne?

*Qui.* In truth, ſir, and ſhe is pretty, and honeſt, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way, I praiſe heaven for it.

*Fen.* Shall I do any good, thinkeſt thou? ſhall I not loſe my ſuit?

*Qui.* Troth, ſir, all is in his hands above: but notwithſtanding, maſter Fenton, I'll be ſworn on a book ſhe loves you.

*Fen.* Well, I ſhall ſee her to-day: hold, there's money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf: if thou ſeeſt her before me, commend me——

*Qui.* Will I? ay, faith, that we will.

*Fen.* Well, farewell; I am in great haſte now.

*Exit* Fenton.

*Qui.* Farewell to your worſhip.—Truly, an honeſt gentleman; but Anne loves him not; for I know Anne's mind as well as another does. *Exit.*

ACT

# ACT II.

## SCENE I.

BEFORE PAGE'S HOUSE.

*Enter Mrs.* Page *reading a Letter.*

*Mrs. P.* WHAT, have I 'ſcap'd love-letters in the holy-day time of my beauty, and am I now a ſubject for them? Let me ſee:

*Aſk me no reaſon why I love you; for though love uſe reaſon for his preciſian, he admits him not for his counſellor: you are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's ſympathy: you are merry, ſo am I; ha, ha! then there's more ſympathy; you love ſack, and ſo do I: would you deſire better ſympathy? let it ſuffice thee, miſtreſs Page, at the leaſt, if the love of a ſoldier can ſuffice, that I love thee: I will not ſay, pity me, 'tis not a ſoldier-like phraſe; but I ſay, love me. By me,*

*Thine own true knight,*
*By day or night,*
*Or any kind of light,*
*With all his might,*
*For thee to fight,* John Falſtaff.

What a Herod of Jewry is this?——O wicked, wicked world! What an unweigh'd behaviour has this Flemiſh drunkard pick'd out of my converſation, that he dares in this manner aſſay me?—Why, he hath not been thrice in my company!—How ſhall I be reveng'd on him? for reveng'd I will be.

*Enter* Mrs. Ford.

*Mrs. F.* Miſtreſs Page! truſt me, I was going to your houſe.

*Mrs. P.* And, truſt me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

*Mrs. F.* Nay, I'll never believe that; I have to ſhew to the contrary.

*Mrs. P.* 'Faith, but you do, in my mind.

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. F.* Well, I do then; yet, I ſay, I could ſhew you to the contrary: O, miſtreſs Page, give me ſome counſel!

*Mrs. P.* What's the matter, woman?

*Mrs. F.* O woman, if it were not for one trifling reſpect, I could come to ſuch honour.

*Mrs. P.* Hang the trifle, woman; take the honour: What is it?—diſpenſe with trifles;—what is it?

*Mrs. F.* I could be knighted.

*Mrs. P.* What?—you jeſt.

*Mrs. F.* We burn day-light;—here, read, read;—perceive how I might be knighted.—I ſhall think the worſe of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking: and yet he would not ſwear; prais'd women's modeſty; and gave ſuch orderly and well-behav'd reproof to all uncomlineſs, that I would have ſworn his diſpoſition would have gone to the truth of his words; but they do no more adhere, and keep place together, than the hundredth pſalm to the tune of *Green Sleeves*. What tempeſt, I trow, threw this whale aſhore at Windſor? How ſhall I be reveng'd on him? Did you ever hear the like?

*Mrs. P.* Letter for letter; but that the name of Page and Ford differs!—To thy great comfort in this myſtery of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy letter: but let thine inherit firſt; for, I proteſt, mine never ſhall. I warrant, he hath a thouſand of theſe letters, writ with blank ſpace for different names.

*Mrs. F.* Why, this is the very ſame; the very hand, the very words: what doth he think of us?

*Mrs. P.* Nay, I know not: it makes me almoſt ready to wrangle with mine own honeſty. I'll entertain myſelf like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, ſure, unleſs he knew ſome ſtain in me, that I know not myſelf, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

*Mrs. F.* Boarding, call you it?

*Mrs. P.* Let's be reveng'd on him: let's appoint him a meeting; and lead him on with a fine baited delay, 'till he hath pawn'd his horſes to mine hoſt of the Garter.

*Mrs. F.* Nay, I will conſent to act any villainy againſt him, that may not ſully the charineſs of our honeſty.—Oh, that my huſband ſaw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealouſy.

*Mrs. P.* Why, look, where he comes; and my good man too; he's as far from jealouſy, as I am from giving him cauſe.

*Mrs. F.*

*Mrs. F.* You are the happier woman.

*Mrs. P.* Let's conſult together againſt this greaſy knight. —Look, who comes yonder.

*Mrs. F.* Mrs. Quickly.

*Mrs. P.* She ſhall be our meſſenger to this paltry knight.

*Mrs. F.* Truſt me, I thought on her; ſhe'll fit it.

*Exeunt.*

*Enter* Ford, Piſtol, Page *and* Nym.

*For.* Well, I hope it be not ſo.

*Pif.* Hope is a curtail-dog in ſome affairs:
Sir John affects thy wife;
He loves thy gally-mawfry; Ford, perpend.

*For.* Love my wife?

*Pif.* With liver burning hot: prevent, or go thou,
Like ſir Actæon he, with Ring-wood at thy heels:—
O, odious is the name!

*For.* What name, ſir?

*Pif.* The horn, I ſay: farewell.
Take heed; have open eye; for thieves do foot by night:
Take heed, ere ſummer comes, or cuckoo-birds do ſing.—
Away, ſir corporal Nym.——
Believe it, Page; he ſpeaks ſenſe.

*Exit* Piſtol.

*For.* I will be patient; I will find out this.

*Nym.* And this is true; I like not the humour of lying. He loves your wife; there's the ſhort and the long. My name is corporal Nym; I ſpeak, and I avouch. 'Tis true:— my name is Nym, and Falſtaff loves your wife.—Adieu! I love not the humour of bread and cheeſe; and there's the humour of it. Adieu. *Exit* Nym.

*Pag. The humour of* it, quoth a'! here's a fellow frights humour out of his wits.

*For.* I will ſeek out Falſtaff; if I do find it, well.

*Pag.* I will not believe ſuch a Cataian, though the prieſt o' the town commended him for a true man.

*For.* 'Twas a good ſenſible fellow: well.

*Pag.* How now, maſter Ford?

*For.* You heard what this knave told me; did you not?

*Pag.* Yes; and you heard what the other told me?

*For.* Do you think there is truth in them?

*Pag.*

*Pag.* Hang 'em, ſlaves! I do not think the knight would offer it: but theſe, that accuſe him in his intent towards our wives, are a yoke of his diſcarded men: very rogues, now they be out of ſervice.

*For.* Were they his men?

*Pag.* Marry, were they.

*For.* I like it never the better for that.—Does he lie at the Garter?

*Pag.* Ay, marry, does he. If he ſhould intend his voyage towards my wife, I would turn her looſe to him; and what he gets more of her than ſharp words, let it lie on my head.

*For.* I do not miſdoubt my wife; but I would be loth to turn them together: A man may be too confident: I would have nothing lie on my head: I cannot be thus ſatisfied.

*Pag.* Look, where my ranting hoſt of the Garter comes: there is either liquor in his pate, or money in his purſe, when he looks ſo merrily.——

*Enter* Hoſt.

How now, mine hoſt?

*Hoſ.* How now, bully-rook? thou'rt a gentleman: cavalero-juſtice, I ſay.

*Enter* Shallow.

*Sha.* I follow, mine hoſt, I follow—Good-even, and twenty, good maſter Page! Maſter Page, will you go with us? we have ſport in hand.

*Hoſ.* Tell him, cavalero-juſtice; tell him, bully-rook.

*Sha.* Sir, there is a fray to be fought, between Sir Hugh, the Welch prieſt, and Caius, the French doctor.

*For.* Good mine hoſt o' the Garter, a word with you.

*Hoſ.* What ſay'ſt thou, bully-rook?

*Sha.* Will you go with us to behold it? My merry hoſt hath had the meaſuring of their weapons; and, I think, he hath appointed them contrary places: for, believe me, I hear the parſon is no jeſter. Hark, I will tell you what our ſport ſhall be.

*Hoſ.* Haſt thou no ſuit againſt my knight, my gueſt-cavalier?

*For.* None, I proteſt: but I'll give you a pottle of burnt ſack to give me recourſe to him, and tell him, my name is Brook, only for a jeſt.

*Hoſ.* My hand, bully: thou ſhalt have egreſs and regreſs; ſaid I well? and thy name ſhall be Brook: it is a merry knight.—Will you go on hearts? *Exit* Hoſt.

*Sha.* Have with you, mine hoſt.

*Pag.* I have heard the Frenchman hath good ſkill in his rapier.

*Sha.* Tut, ſir, I could have told you more: In theſe times you ſtand on diſtance, your paſſes, ſtoccadoes, and I know not what: 'tis the heart, maſter Page; 'tis here, 'tis here. I have ſeen the time, with my long ſword, I would have made you four tall fellows ſkip like rats.

*Enter* Hoſt.

*Hoſ.* Here, boys, here, here! ſhall we wag?

*Page.* Have with you:—I had rather hear them ſcold than fight. [*Exeunt* Hoſt, Shallow, *and* Page.

*For.* Though Page be a ſecure fool, and ſtand ſo firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion ſo eaſily: She was in his company at Page's houſe; and what they made there, I know not. Well, I will look further into't: and I have a diſguiſe to ſound Falſtaff: If I find her honeſt, I loſe not my labour; if ſhe be otherwiſe, 'tis labour well beſtow'd.

*Exit.*

## SCENE II.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

*Enter* Falſtaff, *and* Piſtol.

*Fal.* I will not lend thee a penny.

*Piſ.* Why, then the world's mine oyſter, which I with ſword will open.—I will retort the ſum in equipage.

*Fal.* Not a penny. I have been content, ſir, you ſhould lay my countenance to pawn: I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow, Nym; or elſe you had look'd through the grate like a geminy of baboons. I am damn'd for ſwearing to gentlemen my friends, your were good ſoldiers, and tall fellows: and when miſtreſs Bridget loſt the handle of her fan, I took't upon mine honour thou hadſt it not.

*Piſ.* Did'ſt thou not ſhare? hadſt thou not fifteen-pence?

*Fal.* Reaſon, you rogue, reaſon: Think'ſt thou I'll endanger my ſoul *gratis*? at a word, hang no more about me, I am no

no gibbet for you :—go.—You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue !—you ſtand upon your honour !—Why, thou unconfinable baſeneſs, it is as much as I can do, to keep the terms of my honour preciſe. I, I, I myſelf ſometimes, leaving the fear of heaven on the left hand, and hiding mine honour in my neceſſity, am fain to ſhuffle, to hedge, and to lurch ; and yet you, rogue, will enſconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phraſes, and your bold-beating oaths, under the ſhelter of your honour ! You will not do it, you ?

*Piſ.* I do relent : What would'ſt thou more of man?

*Fal.* Hence, rogue, avaunt; go ſteal and hang.

*Exit* Piſtol.

*Enter* Robin.

*Rob.* Sir, here's a woman would ſpeak with you.

*Fal.* Let her approach, *Exit* Robin.

*Enter Miſtreſs* Quickly.

*Qui.* Give your worſhip good-morrow.

*Fal.* Good-morrow, good wife.

*Qui.* Not ſo, an't pleaſe your worſhip.

*Fal.* Good maid, then.

*Qui.* I'll be ſworn ; as my mother was, the firſt hour I was born.

*Fal.* I do believe the ſwearer: What with me ?

*Qui.* Shall I vouchſafe your worſhip a word or two ?

*Fal.* Two thouſand, fair woman; and I'll vouchſafe thee the hearing.

*Qui.* There is one Miſtreſs Ford, ſir ;—I pray come a little nearer this ways:—I myſelf dwell with maſter doctor Caius.

*Fal.* Well, on: Miſtreſs Ford, you ſay,——

*Qui.* Your worſhip ſays very true : I pray your worſhip, come a little nearer this ways.

*Fal.* I warrant thee, nobody hears. Well : miſtreſs Ford,—what of her ?

*Qui.* Why, ſir, ſhe's a good creature. Lord, lord ! your worſhip's a wanton : Well, heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray !

*Fal.* Miſtreſs Ford ;—come, miſtreſs Ford,——

*Qui.* Marry, this is the ſhort and the long of it; you have brought her into ſuch a canaries, as 'tis wonderful. The beſt

courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windſor, could never have brought her to ſuch a canary. Yet there has been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches; I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; ſmelling ſo ſweetly, all muſk, and ſo ruſhling, I warrant you, in ſilk and gold; and in ſuch alligant terms, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her.

*Fal.* But what ſays ſhe to me? be brief, my good ſhe Mercury,

*Qui.* Marry, ſhe hath receiv'd your letter; for the which ſhe thanks you a thouſand times: and ſhe gives you to notify, that her huſband will be abſence from his houſe between ten and eleven.

*Fal.* Ten and eleven.

*Qui.* Ay, forſooth; and then you may come and ſee the picture, ſhe ſays, that you wot of;—maſter Ford, her huſband, will be from home. Alas! the ſweet woman leads an ill life with him; he's a very jealousy man; ſhe leads a very frampold life with him, good heart.

*Fal.* Ten and eleven: Woman commend me to her; I will not fail her.

*Qui.* Why, you ſay well: But I have another meſſenger to your worſhip: Miſtreſs Page hath her hearty commendations to you too;—and, let me tell you in your ear, ſhe's as fartuous a civil modeſt wife, and one, I tell you, that will not miſs you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windſor, whoe'er be the other: and ſhe bade me tell your worſhip, that her huſband is ſeldom from home; but, ſhe hopes, there will come a time. I never knew a woman ſo dote upon a man; ſurely, I think you have charms, la! yes, in truth.

*Fal.* Not I, I aſſure thee; ſetting the attraction of my good parts aſide, I have no other charms.

*Qui.* Bleſſing on your heart for't!

*Fal.* But, I pray thee, tell me this; has Ford's wife, and Page's wife, acquainted each other how they love me?

*Qui.* That were a jeſt indeed!—they have not ſo little grace, I hope:—that were a trick indeed! But miſtreſs Page would deſire you to ſend her your little page, of all loves: her huſband has a marvellous infection to the little page: and, truely, maſter Page is an honeſt man. Never a wife in Windſor leads a better life than ſhe does; do what ſhe will, ſay what ſhe will, take all, pay all, go to bed when ſhe liſt, riſe when ſhe liſt, all

is

is as she will; and, truly, she deserves it; for if there be a kind woman in Windsor, she is one. You must send her your page; no remedy.

*Fal.* Why, I will.

*Qui.* Nay, but do so then: and, look you, he may come and go between you both; and, in any case, have a nay-word, that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand any thing; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness: old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.

*Fal.* Fare thee well: commend me to them both: there's my purse; I am yet thy debtor!—Boy,

*Enter* Robin.

Go along with this woman.

*Exeunt* Quickly *and* Robin.

This news distracts me! Say'st thou so, old Jack? go thy ways; I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee? Wilt thou, after the expence of so much money, be now a gainer? Good body, I thank thee: let them say 'tis grossly done, so it be fairly done, no matter.

*Enter* Bardolph.

*Bar.* Sir John, there's one master Brook below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted with you; and hath sent your worship a morning's draught of sack.

*Fal.* Brook, is his name?

*Bar.* Ay, sir.

*Fal.* Call him in; *Exit* Bardolph.

Such Brooks are welcome to me, that o'erflow such liquor. Ah! ha! mistress Ford and mistress Page, have I encompassed you? go to; *via!*

*Re-enter* Bardolph, *with* Ford *disguis'd.*

*For.* Bless you, sir.

*Fal.* And you, sir: would you speak with me?

*For.* I make bold to press with so little preparation upon you.

*Fal.* You're welcome: what's your will? Give us leave, drawer. *Exit* Bardolph.

*For.* Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much; my name is Brook.

*Fal.*

*Fal.* Good maſter Brook, I deſire more acquaintance of you.

*For.* Good ſir John, I ſue for yours: not to charge you; for I muſt let you underſtand, I think myſelf in better plight for a lender than you are: the which hath ſomething emboldened me to this unſeaſon'd intruſion; for, they ſay, if money go before, all ways do lie open.

*Fal.* Money is a good ſoldier, ſir, and will on.

*For.* Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me: if you will help me to bear it, ſir John, take all, or half, for eaſing me of the carriage.

*Fal.* Sir, I know not how I may deſerve to be your porter.

*For.* I will tell you, ſir, if you will give me the hearing.

*Fal.* Speak, good maſter Brook; I ſhall be glad to be your ſervant.

*For.* Sir, I will be brief with you;—you have been a man long known to me, though I had never ſo good means, as deſire, to make myſelf acquainted with you. I ſhall diſcover a thing to you, wherein I muſt very much lay open mine own imperfection: but, good ſir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the regiſter of your own, that I may paſs with a reproof the eaſier, ſith you yourſelf know how eaſy it is to be ſuch an offender.

*Fal.* Very well, ſir; proceed.

*For.* There is a gentlewoman in this town, her huſband's name is Ford.

*Fal.* Well, ſir.

*For.* I have long lov'd her, and, I proteſt to you, beſtow'd much on her; follow'd her with a doting obſervance; fee'd every ſlight occaſion, that could but niggardly give me ſight of her; briefly, I have purſued her, as love hath purſued me; which hath been on the wing of all occaſions. But whatſoever I have merited, either in my mind, or in my means, meed, I am ſure, I have receiv'd none; unleſs experience be a jewel; that I have purchas'd at an infinite rate; and that hath taught me to ſay this:

*Love like a ſhadow flies, when ſubſtance love purſues;*
*Purſuing that that flies, and flying what purſues.*

*Fal.* Have you receiv'd no promiſe of ſatisfaction at her hands?

*For.* Never.

*Fal.* Have you importun'd her to ſuch a purpoſe?

*For.*

*For.* Never.

*Fal.* Of what quality was your love then?

*For.* Like a fair houſe, built upon another man's ground; ſo that I have loſt my edifice, by miſtaking the place where I erected it.

*Fal.* To what purpoſe have you unfolded this to me?

*For.* When I have told you that, I have told you all. Some ſay, that, tho' ſhe appear honeſt to me, yet, in other places, ſhe enlargeth her mirth ſo far, that there is ſhrewd conſtruction made of her. Now, ſir John, here is the heart of my purpoſe: you are a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable diſcourſe, of great admittance, authentic in your place and perſon, generally allow'd for your many war-like, court-like, and learned preparations.

*Fal.* O ſir!

*For.* Believe it, for you know it:—there is money; ſpend it, ſpend it; ſpend more; ſpend all I have; only give me ſo much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable ſiege to the honeſty of this Ford's wife; uſe your art of wooing, win her to conſent to you; if any man may, you may as ſoon as any.

*Fal.* Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection, that I ſhould win what you would enjoy? methinks you preſcribe to yourſelf very prepoſterouſly.

*For.* O, underſtand my drift! ſhe dwells ſo ſecurely on the excellency of her honour, that the folly of my ſoul dares not preſent itſelf; ſhe is too bright to be look'd againſt. Now could I come to her with any detection in my hand, my deſires had inſtance and argument to commend themſelves; I could drive her then from the ward of her purity, her reputation, her marriage vow, and a thouſand other her defences, which now are too ſtrongly embattled againſt me: What ſay you to't, ſir John?

*Fal.* Maſter Brook, I will firſt make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and laſt, as I am a gentleman, you ſhall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

*For.* O good ſir!

*Fal.* Maſter Brook, I ſay you ſhall.

*For.* Want no money, ſir John, you ſhall want none.

*Fal.* Want no miſtreſs Ford, maſter Brook, you ſhall want none. I ſhall be with her, I may tell you, by her own appointment; even as you came in to me, her aſſiſtant, or go between, parted from me: I ſay, I ſhall be with her between

ten

ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous rascally knave, her husband, will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

*For.* I am blest in your acquaintance. Do you know Ford, sir?

*Fal.* Hang him, poor cuckoldy knave! I know him not:—yet I wrong him to call him poor; they say, the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money; for the which his wife seems to me well favour'd. I will use her as the key of the cuckoldy rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home.

*For.* I would you knew Ford, sir; that you might avoid him if you saw him.

*Fal.* Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cudgel; it shall hang like a meteor o'er the cuckold's horns: master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate over the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife.—Come to me soon at night:—Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style; thou, master Brook, shalt know him for knave and cuckold:—come to me soon at night. *Exit* Falstaff.

*For.* What a damn'd Epicurean rascal is this!—My heart is ready to crack with impatience.—Who says, this is improvident jealousy? my wife hath sent to him, the hour is fix'd, the match is made: would any man have thought this?—See the hell of having a false woman! my bed shall be abus'd, my coffers ransack'd, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villainous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms! names!—Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer well; Barbason well; yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends: but cuckold! wittol-cuckold! the devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass, a secure ass; he will trust his wife, he will not be jealous: I will rather trust parson Hugh the Welchman with my cheese, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself: then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect. Heaven be prais'd for my jealousy!—Eleven o'clock the hour;—I will prevent this, detect my wife, be reveng'd on Falstaff, and laugh at Page: I will about it;—better three hours too soon, than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie! cuckold! cuckold! cuckold!

*Exit.*

SCENE

## SCENE III.

WINDSOR PARK.

*Enter* Caius *and* Rugby!

*Cai.* JACK Rugby!

*Rug.* Sir.

*Cai.* Vat is de clock, Jack?

*Rug.* 'Tis paſt the hour, ſir, that ſir Hugh promis'd to meet.

*Caius.* By gar, he has ſave his ſoul dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible vell, dat he is no come: by gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

*Rug.* He is wiſe, ſir; he knew your worſhip would kill him, if he came.

*Cai.* By gar, de herring is no dead, ſo as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

*Rug.* Alas, ſir, I cannot fence.

*Cai.* Villain-a, take your rapier.

*Rug.* Forbear; here's company.

*Enter* Hoſt, Shallow, Slender, *and* Page.

*Hos.* Bleſs thee, bully doctor.

*Sha.* Save you, maſter doctor Caius.

*Pag.* Now, good maſter doctor!

*Sle.* Give you good-morrow, ſir.

*Cai.* Vat be all you von, two, tree, four, come for?

*Hos.* To ſee thee fight, to ſee thee foin, to ſee thee traverſe, to ſee thee here, to ſee thee there; to ſee thee paſs thy punto, thy ſtock, thy reverſe, thy diſtance, thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian! is he dead, my Franciſo? ha, bully! What ſays my Æſculapius? my Galen? my heart of elder? ha! is he dead, bully Stale? is he dead?

*Cai.* By gar, he is de coward Jack prieſt of de vorld; he is not ſhew his face.

*Hos.* Thou art a Caſtilian king, Urinal! Hector of Greece, my boy!

*Cai.* I pray you bear vitneſs that me have ſtay ſix or ſeven, two, tree hours for him, and he is no come.

*Sha.* He is the wiſer man, maſter doctor: he is a curer of ſouls, and you a curer of bodies; if you ſhould fight, you go againſt the hair of your profeſſions: is it not true, maſter Page?

*Pag.* Maſter Shallow, you have yourſelf been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

*Sha.* Bodikins, maſter Page, though I now be old, and of the peace, if I ſee a ſword out, my finger itches to make one: though we are juſtices, and doctors, and churchmen, maſter Page, we have ſome ſalt of our youth in us; we are the ſons of women, maſter Page.

*Pag.* 'Tis true, maſter Shallow.

*Sha.* It will be found ſo, maſter Page. Maſter doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am ſworn of the peace: you have ſhewn yourſelf a wiſe phyſician, and ſir Hugh hath ſhewn himſelf a wiſe and patient churchman: you muſt go with me, maſter doctor.

*Hos.* Pardon, gueſt juſtice:—A word, monſieur muck-water.

*Cai.* Muck water! vat is dat?

*Hos.* Muck-water, in our Engliſh tongue, is valour, bully.

*Cai.* By gar, then I have as much muck-vater as de Engliſhman:—Scurvy-jack-dog! by gar, me vill cut his ears.

*Hos.* He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

*Cai.* Clapper-de-claw! vat is dat?

*Hos.* That is, he will make thee amends.

*Cai.* By gar, me do look, he ſhall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

*Hos.* And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

*Cai.* Me tank you for dat.

*Hos.* And moreover, bully,—But firſt, maſter gueſt, and maſter Page, and eke cavalero Slender, go you through the town to Frogmore.

*Pag.* Sir Hugh is there, is he?

*Hos.* He is there: ſee what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about the fields; will it do well?

*Sha.* We will do it.

*All.* Adieu, good maſter doctor.

*Exeunt* Page, Shallow, *and* Slender.

*Cai.* By gar, me vill kill de Velſhman; for he ſpeak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page.

*Hos.* Sheath thy impatience; throw cold water on thy choler:

choler: go about the fields with me through Frogmore; I will bring thee where miſtreſs Anne Page is, at a farm-houſe a feaſting; and thou ſhalt woo her: ſaid I well?

*Cai.* By gar, me tank you for dat: by gar, I love you; and I ſhall procure-a you de good gueſt, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentlemen, my patients.

*Hos.* For the which I will be thy adverſary toward Anne Page; ſaid I well?

*Cai.* By gar, 'tis good; vell ſaid.

*Hos.* Let us wag then.

*Cai.* Come at my heels, Jack Rugby.

*Exeunt.*

## ACT III

### SCENE I.

A FIELD NEAR FROGMORE.

*Enter* Evans, *and* Simple.

*Eva.* I PRAY you now, good maſter Slender's ſerving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you looked for maſter Caius, that calls himſelf *Doctor of Phyſic?*

*Sim.* Marry, ſir, the City-ward, the Park-ward, every way; old Windſor way, and every way but the town way.

*Eva.* I moſt vehemently deſire you, you will alſo look that way.

*Sim.* I will, ſir. *Exit* Simple.

*Eva.* Pleſs my ſoul! how full of cholers I am, and trembling of mind! I ſhall be glad if he have deceive me: how melancholies I am!—I will knog his urinals about his knave's coſtard, when I have good opportunities for the 'ork;—pleſs my ſoul!

*By ſhallow rivers, to whoſe falls*
*Melodious birds ſing madrigals;*
*There will we make our peds of roſes,*
*And a thouſand vagrant poſies.*
*By ſhallow——*

Mercy on me! I have a great diſpoſitions to cry.

*Melodious birds ſing madrigals;——*

*Enter* Simple.

*Sim.* Yonder he is coming this way, ſir Hugh.

*Eva.* He's welcome:——

*By ſhallow rivers, to whoſe falls—*

Heaven proſper the right!—What weapons is he?

*Sim.* No weapons, ſir: There comes my maſter, maſter Shallow, and another gentleman from Frogmore, over the ſtile, this way.

*Eva.* Pray you, give me my gown; or elſe keep it in your arms.

*Enter* Page, Shallow, *and* Slender.

*Sha.* How now, maſter parſon? good-morrow, good ſir Hugh. Keep a gameſter from the dice, and a good ſtudent from his book, and it is wonderful.

*Sle.* Ah ſweet Anne Page!

*Pag.* Save you, good ſir Hugh!

*Eva.* Pleſs you from his mercy ſake, all of you!

*Sha.* What! the ſword and the word! do you ſtudy them both, maſter parſon?

*Pag.* And youthful ſtill, in your doublet and hoſe, this raw rheumatic day?

*Eva.* There is reaſons and cauſes for it.

*Pag.* We are come to you to do a good office, maſter parſon.

*Eva.* Fery well: what is it?

*Pag.* Yonder is a moſt reverend gentleman, who, belike, having receiv'd wrong by ſome perſon, is at moſt odds with his own gravity and patience, that ever you ſaw.

*Sha.* I have liv'd threeſcore years, and upward; I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning, ſo wide of his own reſpect.

*Eva.* What is he?

*Pag.* I think you know him; maſter doctor Caius, the renowned French phyſician.

*Eva.* Heaven's will, and his paſſion o' my heart! I had as lief you would tell me of a meſs of porridge.

*Pag.* Why?

*Eva.* He has no more knowledge in Hibocrates and Galen,—and he is a knave beſides; a cowardly knave, as you would deſires to be acquainted withal.

*Pag.* I warrant you, he's the man ſhould fight with him.

*Sle.*

*Sle.* O, ſweet Anne Page!

*Sha.* It appears ſo by his weapons:—Keep them aſunder;—here comes doctor Caius.

*Enter* Hoſt, Caius, *and* Rugby.

*Pag.* Nay, good maſter parſon, keep in your weapon.

*Sha.* So do you, good maſter doctor.

*Hos.* Diſarm them, and let them queſtion; let them keep their limbs whole, and hack our Engliſh.

*Cai.* I pray you, let-a me ſpeak a vord vit your ear: verefore vill you not meet-a me?

*Eva.* Pray you, uſe your patience: in good time.

*Cai.* By gar, you are de coward, de Jack dog, John ape.

*Eva.* Pray you, let us not be laughing-ſtogs to other men's humours; I deſire you in friendſhip, and I will one one way or other make you amends:—I will knog your urinals about your knave's cogs-combs, for missing your meetings and appointments.

*Cai. Diable!* — Jack Rugby,—mine *Hoſt de Jarterre*, have I not ſtay for him, to kill him? have I not, at de place I did appoint?

*Eva.* As I am a Chriſtian's ſoul, now, look you, this is the place appointed; I'll be judgment by mine hoſt of the Garter.

*Hoſ.* Peace, I ſay, Guallia and Gaul, French and Welch, ſoul-curer and body-curer.

*Cai.* Ay, dat is very good! excellent!

*Hoſ.* Peace, I ſay; hear mine hoſt of the Garter. Am I politic? am I ſubtle? am I Machiavel? Shall I loſe my doctor? no; he gives me the potions and the motions. Shall I loſe my parſon? my prieſt? my ſir Hugh? no; he gives me the pro-verbs and the no-verbs.—Give me thy hand, terreſtrial; ſo:—Give me thy hand, celeſtial; ſo.—Boys of art, I have deceiv'd you both; I have directed you to wrong places: your hearts are mighty, your ſkins are whole, and let burnt ſack be the iſſue.—Come, lay their ſwords to pawn; follow me, lad of peace; follow, follow, follow.

*Sha.* Truſt me, a mad hoſt.—Follow, gentlemen, follow.

*Sle.* O, ſweet Anne Page!

*Exeunt* Shallow, Slender, Page, Hoſt, *and* Simple.

*Cai.* Ha! do I perceive dat? have you make-a de ſot of us? ha, ha!

*Eva.*

*Eva.* This is well; he has made us his vlouting-ſtog.—I deſire you, that we may be friends; and let us knog our prains together, to be revenge on this ſame ſcald, ſcurvy, cogging companion, the hoſt of the garter.

*Cai.* By gar, vit all my heart; he promiſe to bring me vere is Anne Page: by gar, he deceive me too.

*Eva.* Well, I will ſmite his noddles;——Pray you follow. *Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

A STREET.

*Enter* Robin *and* Mrs. Page.

*Mrs. P.* NAY, keep your way, little gallant; you were wont to be a follower, but now you are a leader. Whether had you rather lead mine eyes, or eye your maſter's heels?

*Rob.* I had rather, forſooth, go before you like a man, than follow him like a dwarf.

*Mrs. P.* O, you are a flattering boy; now, I ſee, you'll be a courtier.

*Enter* Ford.

*For.* Well met, miſtreſs Page. Whither go you?

*Mrs. P.* Truly, ſir, to ſee your wife. Is ſhe at home?

*For.* Ay: and as idle as ſhe may hang together, for want of company. I think, if your huſbands were dead, you two would marry.

*Mrs. P.* Be ſure of that,—two other huſbands.

*Ford.* Where had you this pretty weather-cock?

*Mrs. P.* I cannot tell what the dickins his name is my huſband had him of. What do you call your knight's name, ſirrah?

*Rob.* Sir John Falſtaff.

*For.* Sir John Falſtaff!

*Mrs. P.* He, he; I can never hit on's name. There is ſuch a league between my good man and he!—Is your wife at home, indeed?

*For.* Indeed, ſhe is.

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. P.* By your leave, ſir;—I am ſick till I ſee her.

*Exeunt* Mrs. Page *and* Robin.

*For.* Has Page any brains? hath he any eyes? hath he any thinking? Sure, they ſleep; he hath no uſe of them. Why, this boy will carry a letter twenty miles, as eaſy as a cannon will ſhoot point blank twelve ſcore. He pieces out his wife's inclination; he gives her folly motion and advantage; and now ſhe's going to my wife, and Falſtaff's boy with her. A man may hear this ſhower ſing in the wind! —and Falſtaff's boy with her!——Good plots!—they are laid; and our revolted wives ſhare damnation together.—Well; I will take him, then torture my wife, pluck the borrow'd veil of modeſty from the ſo ſeeming miſtreſs Page; divulge Page himſelf for a ſecure and wilful Actæon. *(The Clock ſtrikes.)* The clock gives me my cue, and my aſſurance bids me ſearch; there I ſhall find Falſtaff: I ſhall be rather prais'd for this, than mock'd; for it is as poſitive as the earth is firm, that Falſtaff is there.—

*Enter* Page, Shallow, Slender, Hoſt, Evans, Caius, Rugby, *and* Simple.

*Sha. Pag. &c.* Well met, maſter Ford.

*For.* Truſt me, a good knot: I have good cheer at home; and, I pray you all, go with me.

*Sha.* I muſt excuſe myſelf, maſter Ford.

*Sle.* And ſo muſt I, ſir; we have appointed to dine with miſtreſs Anne, and I would not break with her for more money than I'll ſpeak of.

*Sha.* We have linger'd about a match between Anne Page and my couſin Slender, and this day we ſhall have our anſwer.

*Sle.* I hope I have your good-will, father Page.

*Pag.* You have, maſter Slender; I ſtand wholly for you: —but my wife, maſter doctor, is for you altogether.

*Cai.* Ay, by gar; and de maid is love-a me; my nurſh-a Quickly tell me ſo muſh.

*Hoſ.* What ſay you to young maſter Fenton? he capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth, he writes verſes, he ſpeaks holy-day, he ſmells April and May; he will carry't, he will carry't; 'tis in his buttons; he will carry't.

*Pag.* Not by my conſent, I promiſe you. The gentleman

is

is of no having ; he kept company with the wild Prince and Poins ; he is of too high a region, he knows too much.

*For.* I beſeech you, heartily, ſome of you go home with me to dinner ; beſides your cheer, you ſhall have ſport ; I will ſhew you a monſter.—Maſter doctor, you ſhall go ;—ſo ſhall you, maſter Page ;—and you, Sir Hugh.

*Sha.* Well, fare you well :—we ſhall have the freer wooing at Maſter Page's.

*Exeunt* Shallow, Slender, *and* Simple.

*Hoſ.* Farewell, my hearts. I will to my honeſt knight Falſtaff, and drink canary with him.

*Exit* Hoſt.

*For.* I think I ſhall drink in pipe-wine firſt with him ; I'll make him dance. Will you go, gentles ?

*Exeunt* Ford, Page, *and* Evans.

*Cai.* Go home, John Rugby ; I come anon.

*Exeunt* Caius *ond* Rugby.

## SCENE III.

A ROOM IN FORD'S HOUSE.

*Enter* Mrs. Ford *and* Mrs. Page.

*Mrs. F.* WHAT, John, what, Robert !

*Mrs. P.* Quickly, quickly ; is the buck-baſket——

*Mrs. F.* I warrant.———What Robin, I ſay.

*Enter* John *and* Robert, *with a baſket.*

*Mrs. P.* Come, come, come.

*Mrs. F.* Here, ſet it down.

*Mrs. P.* Give your men the charge ; we muſt be brief.

*Mrs. F.* Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard by in the brew-houſe ; and when I ſuddenly call you, come forth, and, without any pauſe or ſtaggering, take this baſket on your ſhoulders : that done, trudge with it in all haſte, and carry it among the whitſters in Datchet mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch, cloſe by the Thames' ſide.

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. P.* You will do it?

*Mrs. F.* I have told them over and over; they lack no direction. Be gone, and come when you are call'd.

*Exeunt* John *and* Robert.

*Mrs. P.* Here comes little Robin.

*Enter* Robin.

*Mrs. F.* How now, my eyas-muſket? what news with you?

*Rob.* My maſter, ſir John, is come in at your back door, Mrs. Ford; and requeſts your company.

*Mrs. P.* You little Jack-a-lent, have you been true to us?

*Rob.* Ay, I'll be ſworn: my maſter knows not of your being here; and hath threatened to put me into everlaſting liberty, if I tell you of it; for, he ſwears, he'll turn me away.

*Mrs. P.* Thou'rt a good boy.—I'll go hide me.

*Mrs. F.* Do ſo.—Go, tell thy maſter I am alone.

*Exit* Robin.

Miſtreſs Page, remember you your cue.

*Mrs. P.* I warrant thee; if I do not act it, hiſs me.

*Exit* Mrs. Page.

*Mrs. F.* Go to then;—we'll uſe this unwholeſome humidity, this groſs watry pumpion;—we'll teach him to know turtles from jays.

*Enter* Falſtaff.

*Fal. Have I caught* thee, *my heavenly jewel?* Why, this is the period of my ambition: O, this bleſſed hour!

*Mrs. F* O ſweet ſir John!

*Fal.* Miſtreſs Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, miſtreſs Ford. Now ſhall I ſin in my wiſh. I would thy huſband were dead; I'll ſpeak it before the beſt lord, I would make make thee my lady.

*Mrs. F* I your lady, ſir John! alas, I ſhould be a pitiful lady.

*Fal.* Let the court of France ſhew me ſuch another; I ſee how thine eye would emulate the diamond. Thou haſt the right arched bent of the brow, that becomes the ſhip-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance.

*Mrs. F.* A plain kerchief, ſir John; my brows become nothing elſe, nor that well neither.

*Fal.* Thou art a traitor to ſay ſo: thou would'ſt make an abſolute courtier. I ſee what thou wert, if fortune thy foe were not; nature is thy friend. Come, thou canſt not hide it.

*Mrs. F.* Believe me, there is no ſuch thing in me.

*Fal.* What made me love thee? let that perſuade thee, there's ſomething extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog, and ſay, thou art this, and that, like a many of theſe liſping hawthorn buds, that come like women in men's apparel, and ſmell like Bucklers-bury in ſimple-time; I cannot: but I love thee; none but thee; and thou deſerveſt it.

*Mrs. F.* Do not betray me, ſir; I fear you love miſtreſs Page.

*Fal.* Thou might'ſt as well ſay, I love to walk by the Counter-gate; which is as hateful to me as the reek of a lime-kiln.

*Mrs. F.* Well, heaven knows how I love you; and you ſhall one day find it.

*Fal.* Keep in that mind; I'll deſerve it.

*Mrs. F.* Nay, I muſt tell you, ſo you do; or elſe I could not be in that mind.

*Enter* Robin.

*Rob.* Miſtreſs Ford, miſtreſs Ford! here's miſtreſs Page at the door, looking wildly, and would needs ſpeak with you preſently. *Exit* Robin.

*Fal.* She ſhall not ſee me; I will enſconce me behind the arras.

*Mrs. F.* Pray you, do ſo; ſhe's a very tattling woman.—

Falſtaff *hides himſelf.*

*Enter* Robin *and* Mrs. Page.

What's the matter? how now?

*Mrs. P.* O miſtreſs Ford, what have you done? you're ſham'd, you are overthrown, you are undone for ever.

*Mrs. F.* What's the matter, good miſtreſs Page?

*Mrs. P.* O well-a-day, miſtreſs Ford! having an honeſt man to your huſband, to give him ſuch cauſe of ſuſpicion.

*Mrs. F.* What cauſe of ſuſpicion?

*Mrs. P.* What cauſe of ſuſpicion?—Out upon you!—how am I miſtook in you!

*Mrs. F.* Why, alas, what's the matter?

*Mrs. P.* Your huſband's coming hither, woman, with all the

the officers in Windſor, to ſearch for a gentleman, that, he ſays, is here now in the houſe, by your conſent, to take an ill advantage of his abſence; you are undone.

*Mrs. F.* Speak louder.—[*Aſide.*] 'Tis not ſo, I hope.

*Mrs. P.* Pray heaven it be not ſo, that you have ſuch a man here: but 'tis moſt certain your huſband's coming with half Windſor at his heels, to ſearch for ſuch a one. I come before to tell you: if you know yourſelf clear, why I am glad of it: but if you have a friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amaz'd; call all your ſenſes to you; defend your reputation, or bid farewell to your good life for ever.

*Mrs. F.* What ſhall I do?—There is a gentleman, my dear friend; and I fear not mine own ſhame, ſo much as his peril: I had rather than a thouſand pound he were out of the houſe.

*Mrs P.* For ſhame, never ſtand *you had rather*, and *you had rather*; your huſband's here at hand, bethink you of ſome conveyance: in the houſe you cannot hide him.—Oh, how have you deceived me!—Look, here is a baſket; if he be of any reaſonable ſtature, he may creep in here; and throw foul linen upon him, as if it were going to bucking: or, it is whiting-time, ſend him by your two men to Datchet mead.

*Mrs. F.* He's too big to go in there: what ſhall I do?

*Enter* Falſtaff.

*Fal.* Let me ſee't, let me ſee't! O let me ſee't! I'll in, I'll in;—follow your friends's counſel;—I'll in.

*Mrs. P.* What! ſir John Falſtaff! Are theſe your letters, knight?

*Fal.* I love thee, and none but thee,—help me away: let me creep in here; I'll never——

*He goes into the baſket, they cover him with the linen.*

*Mrs. P.* Help to cover your maſter, boy: call your men, miſtreſs Ford. *Exit* Robin.

You diſſembling knight!

*Mrs. F.* What, John, Robert, John!

*Enter* John *and* Robert.

Go take up theſe clothes here, quickly: where's the cowl-ſtaff? look, how you drumble: carry them to the laundreſs in Datchet mead; quickly, come.

*Enter* Ford, Page, Caius, *and* Evans.

*For.* Pray you, come near: if I ſuſpect without cauſe, why then make ſport at me, then let me be your jeſt, I deſerve it. —How now? whither bear you this?

*Mrs. F.* Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? you were beſt meddle with buck-waſhing.

*For.* Buck! I would I could waſh myſelf of the buck! Buck, buck, buck! Ay, buck! I warrant you, buck! and of the ſeaſon too, it ſhall appear.

*Exeunt* John *and* Robert *with the baſket.*

Gentlemen, I have dream'd to night; I'll tell you my dream. —Here, here, here be my keys: aſcend my chambers, ſearch, ſeek, find out: I'll warrant we'll unkennel the fox:—let me ſtop this way firſt:—ſo, now uncape.

*Pag.* Good maſter Ford, be contented: you wrong yourſelf too much.

*For.* True, maſter Page:—up, gentlemen; you ſhall ſee ſport anon: follow me, gentlemen.

*Exit* Ford.

*Pag.* Nay, follow him, gentlemen; ſee the iſſue of his ſearch. *Exit* Page

*Eva.* This is fery fantaſtical humours and jealouſies.

*Exit* Evans.

*Caius.* By gar, 'tis no de faſhion of France: it is not jealous in France. *Exit* Caius.

*Mrs. P.* Is there not a double excellency in this?

*Mrs. F.* I know not which pleaſes me better, that my huſband is deceiv'd, or ſir John.

*Mrs. P.* What a taking was he in, when your huſband aſk'd who was in the baſket!

*Mrs. F.* I think my huſband had ſome ſpecial ſuſpicion of Falſtaff's being here; for I never ſaw him ſo groſs in his jealouſy till now.

*Mrs. P.* I will lay a plot to try that: and we will yet have more tricks with Falſtaff.

*Mrs. F.* Shall we ſend that fooliſh carrion, miſtreſs Quickly, to him, and excuſe his throwing into the water; and give him another hope, to betray him to another puniſhment?

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. P.* We'll do it; let him be ſent for to-morrow by eight o'clock, to have amends.

*Enter* Ford *and* Page.

*For.* I cannot find him: may be, the knave bragg'd of that he could not compaſs.

*Mrs. P.* Heard you that?

*Mrs. F.* Ay, ay; peace!—You uſe me well, maſter Ford, do you?

*For.* Ay, I do ſo.

*Mrs. F.* Heaven make you better than your thoughts!

*For.* Amen.

*Mrs. P.* You do yourſelf mighty wrong, maſter Ford.

*Exeunt* Mrs Ford *and* Mrs. Page.

*For.* Ay, ay; I muſt bear it.

*Enter* Evans *and* Caius.

*Eva.* If there be any pody in the houſe, and in the chambers, and in the coffers, and in the preſſes, heaven forgive my ſins.

*Cai.* By gar, nor I too; dere is no bodies.

*Pag.* Fie, fie, maſter Ford! are you not aſham'd? what ſpirit, what devil ſuggeſts this imagination? I would not have your diſtemper in this kind, for the wealth of Windſor-Caſtle.

*For.* 'Tis my fault, maſter Page: I ſuffer for it.

*Eva.* You ſuffer for a pad conſcience: your wife is as honeſt a 'omans, as I will deſires among five thouſand, and five hundred too.

*Cai.* By gar, I ſee, 'tis an honeſt woman.

*For.* Well;—I promis'd you a dinner;—come, come, walk in the park.

*Pag.* Let's go, gentlemen; but, truſt me, we'll mock him. I do invite you to-morrow morning to my houſe to breakfaſt; after, we'll a birding together; I have a fine hawk for the buſh: ſhall it be ſo?

*For.* Any thing.—Pray you, go, maſter Page.

*Exeunt* Ford *and* Page.

*Eva.* I pray you now, remembrance to-morrow on the louſy knave, mine hoſt.

*Cai.* Dat is good; by gar, vit all my heart.

*Eva.* A louſy knave; to have his gibes, and his mockeries.

*Exeunt.*

SCENE

## SCENE IV.

A ROOM IN PAGE'S HOUSE.

*Enter* Fenton *and* Anne Page.

*Fen.* I SEE I cannot get thy father's love;
Therefore no more turn me to him, ſweet Nan.
*Ann.* Alas! how then!
*Fen.* Why, thou muſt be thyſelf.
He doth object I am too great of birth;
And that, my ſtate being gall'd with my expence,
I ſeek to heal it only by his wealth:
Beſides theſe, other bars he lays before me,——
My riots paſt, my wild ſocieties;
And tells me, 'tis a thing impoſſible
I ſhould love thee, but as a property.
*Ann.* May be he tells you true.
*Fen.* No, heaven ſo ſpeed me in my time to come!
Albeit, I will confeſs, thy father's wealth
Was the firſt motive that I woo'd thee, Anne:
Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value
Than ſtamps in gold, or ſums in ſealed bags:
And 'tis the very riches of thyſelf
That now I aim at.
*Ann.* Gentle maſter Fenton,
Yet ſeek my father's love, ſtill ſeek it, ſir:
If opportunity and humbleſt ſuit
Cannot attain it, why then——Hark you hither.

Fenton *and* Anne *go apart.*

*Enter* Mrs. Quickly, Shallow, and Slender.

*Sha.* Break their talk, miſtreſs Quickly; my kinſman ſhall ſpeak for himſelf.
*Sle.* I'll make a ſhaft or a bolt on't: 'ſlid 'tis but venturing.
*Sha.* Be not diſmay'd.
*Sle.* No, ſhe ſhall not diſmay me: I care not for that,—but that I am afeard.
*Qui.* Hark ye, maſter Slender would ſpeak a word with you.

*Ann.*

*Ann.* I come to him.—This is my father's choice.
O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults
Looks handſome in three-hundred pounds a-year!

*Qui.* And how does good maſter Fenton? Pray you a word with you.

*Sha.* She's coming; to her, coz. O boy, thou hadſt a father!

*Sle.* I had a father, miſtreſs Ann;—my uncle can tell you good jeſts of him:—pray you, uncle, tell miſtreſs Anne the the jeſt, how my father ſtole two geeſe out of a pen, good uncle.

*Sha.* Miſtreſs Anne, my couſin loves you.

*Sle.* Ay, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Glocesterſhire.

*Sha.* He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

*Sle.* Ay, that I will, come cut and long tail, under the degree of a 'ſquire.

*Sha.* He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure.

*Ann.* Good maſter Shallow, let him woo for himſelf.

*Sha.* Marry, I thank you for it; I thank you for that—good comfort. She calls you, coz; I'll leave you.

*Exit* Shallow.

*Ann.* Now, maſter Slender.

*Sle.* Now, good miſtreſs Anne.

*Ann.* What is your will?

*Sle.* My will? od's heartlings, that's a pretty jeſt, indeed! I ne'er made my will yet, I thank heaven; I am not ſuch a ſickly creature, I give heaven praiſe.

*Ann.* I mean, maſter Slender, what would you with me?

*Sle.* Truly, for mine own part, I would little or nothing with you: your father and my uncle have made motions: if it be my luck, ſo; if not, happy man be his dole! They can tell you how things go, better than I can: you may aſk your father; here he comes.

*Enter* Page, Mrs. Page, *and* Shallow.

*Pag.* Now, maſter Slender:—Love him, daughter Anne.—
Why, how now! what does maſter Fenton here?
You wrong me, ſir, thus ſtill to haunt my houſe:
I told you, ſir, my daughter is diſpos'd of.

*Fen.* Nay, maſter Page, be not impatient.

*Mrs. P.* Good maſter Fenton, come not to my child.

*Pag.* She is no match for you.

*Fen.*

*Fen.* Sir, will you hear me?

*Pag.* No, good maſter Fenton.
Come, maſter Shallow;—come, ſon Slender; in:—
Knowing my mind, you wrong me, maſter Fenton.

*Exeunt* Page, Shallow, *and* Slender.

*Qui.* Speak to miſtreſs Page.

*Fen.* Good miſtreſs Page, for that I love your daughter
In ſuch a righteous faſhion as I do;
Let me have your good will.

*Ann.* Good mother, do not marry me to yon' fool.

*Mrs. P.* I mean it not; I ſeek you a better huſband.

*Qui.* That's my maſter, maſter doctor.

*Ann.* Alas! I had rather be ſet quick i' the earth.

*Mrs. P.* Come, trouble not yourſelf; good maſter Fenton,
I will not be your friend nor enemy:
My daughter will I queſtion how ſhe loves you,
And, as I find her, ſo am I affected;
'Till then, farewell, ſir:—ſhe muſt needs go in;
Her father will be angry.

*Exeunt* Mrs. Page *and* Anne.

*Fen.* Farewell, gentle miſtreſs; farewell, Nan.

*Qui.* This is my doing now;—nay, ſaid I, will you caſt away your child on a fool, and a phyſician? Look on, maſter Fenton:—this is my doing.

*Fen.* I thank thee; and, I pray thee, once to night give my ſweet Nan this ring: there's for thy pains.

*Exit* Fenton.

*Qui.* Now heaven ſend thee good fortune! A kind heart he hath: a woman would run through fire and water for ſuch a kind heart. But yet, I would my maſter had miſtreſs Anne; or I would maſter Slender had her; or, in ſooth, I would maſter Fenton had her: I will do what I can for them all three; for ſo I have promis'd, and I'll be as good as my word; but ſpecioufly for maſter Fenton. Well, I muſt of another errand to Sir John Falſtaff for my two miſtreſſes: what a beaſt am I to ſlack it!

*Exit.*

SCENE

## SCENE V.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

*Enter* Falſtaff *and* Bardolph.

*Fal.* BARDOLPH, I ſay ——

*Bar.* Here, ſir.

*Fal.* Go fetch me a quart of ſack; put a toaſt in't.
*Exit* Bardolph.

Have I liv'd to be carried in a baſket, like a barrow of butcher's offal; and to be thrown into the Thames! Well; if I be ſerv'd ſuch another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out, and butter'd, and give them to a dog for a new year's gift. The rogues ſlighted me into the river with as little remorſe as they would have drown'd a bitch's blind puppies, fifteen i' the litter: and you may know by my ſize, that I have a kind of alacrity in ſinking, if the bottom were as deep as hell, I ſhould down. I had been drown'd, but that the ſhore was ſhelvy and ſhallow: a death that I abhor; for the water ſwells a man; and what a thing ſhould I have been, when I had been ſwell'd! I ſhould have been a mountain of mummy.

*Re-enter* Bardolph, *with the Wine.*

*Bar.* Here's Mrs. Quickly, ſir, would ſpeak with you.

*Fal.* Come, let me pour in ſome ſack to the Thames water; for my belly's as cold, as if I had ſwallow'd ſnow-balls. Call her in.

*Bar.* Come in, woman.

*Enter Miſtreſs* Quickly.

*Qui.* By your leave;—I cry you mercy:—give your worſhip good morrow.

*Fal.* Go brew me a pottle of ſack finely.

*Bar.* With eggs, ſir?

*Fal.* Simple of itſelf. *Exit* Bardolph.
How now?

*Qui.* Marry, ſir, I come to your worſhip from Mrs. Ford.

*Fal.* Miſtreſs Ford! I have had ford enough: I was thrown into the ford; I have my belly-full of ford.

*Qui.* Alas the day! good heart, that was not her fault: ſhe does ſo take on with her men; they miſtook their erection.

*Fal.* So did I mine, to build upon a fooliſh woman's promiſe.

*Qui.* Well, ſhe laments, ſir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to ſee it. Her huſband goes this morning a birding; ſhe deſires you once more to come to her between eight and nine: I muſt carry her word quickly: ſhe'll make you amends, I warrant you.

*Fal.* Well, I will viſit her: tell her ſo; and bid her think what a man is: let her conſider his frailty, and then judge of my merit.

*Qui.* I will tell her.

*Fal.* Do ſo. Between nine and ten, ſay'ſt thou?

*Qui.* Eight and nine, ſir.

*Fal.* Well, begone: I will not miſs her.

*Qui.* Peace be with you, ſir!

*Exit* Mrs. Quickly.

*Fal.* I marvel, I hear not of maſter Brook; he ſent me me word to ſtay within: I like his money well. Oh, here he comes.

*Enter* Ford *diſguiſed.*

*For.* Bleſs you, ſir?

*Fal.* Now, maſter Brook? you come to know what hath paſs'd between me and Ford's wife?

*For.* That, indeed, ſir John, is my buſineſs.

*Fal.* Maſter Brook, I will not lie to you; I was at her houſe the hour ſhe appointed me.

*For.* And how ſped you, ſir?

*Fal.* Very ill-favour'dly, maſter Brook.

*For.* How ſo, ſir? Did ſhe change her determination?

*Fal.* No, maſter Brook: but the peaking cornuto her huſband, maſter Brook, dwelling in a continual 'larum of jealouſy, comes me in the inſtant of our encounter, after we had embrac'd, kiſs'd, proteſted, and, as it were, ſpoke the prologue of our comedy; and at his heels a rabble of his companions, thither provok'd and inſtigated by his diſtemper, and, forſooth, to ſearch his houſe for his wife's love.

*For.* What, while you were there

*Fal.* While I was there.

*For.* And did he ſearch for you, and could not find you?

*Fal.* You ſhall hear. As good luck would have it, comes in one miſtreſs Page; gives intelligence of Ford's approach; and, by her invention, and Ford's wife's diſtraction, they convey'd me into a buck-baſket.

*For.*

*For.* A buck-baſket!

*Fal.* By the Lord, a buck-baſket: ramm'd me in with foul ſhirts and ſmocks, ſocks, foul ſtockings, and greaſy napkins; that, maſter Brook, there was the rankeſt compound of villainous ſmell that ever offended noſtril.

*For.* And how long lay you there?

*Fal.* Nay, you ſhall hear, maſter Brook, what I have ſuffer'd to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus cramm'd in the baſket, a couple of Ford's knaves, his hinds, were call'd forth by their miſtreſs, to carry me in the name of foul cloaths to Dachet-lane: they took me on their ſhoulders: met the jealous knave their maſter in the door; who aſk'd them once or twice what they had in their baſket: I quak'd for fear, leſt the lunatic knave would have ſearch'd it; but fate, ordaining he ſhould be a cuckold, held his hand. Well; on went he for a ſearch, and away went I for foul cloathes. But mark the ſequel, maſter Brook: I ſuffer'd the pangs of three ſeveral deaths: firſt, an intolerable fright, to be detected with a jealous bell-weather: next, to be compaſs'd, like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head: and then, to be ſtopp'd in, like a ſtrong diſtillation, with ſtinking clothes that fretted in their own greaſe: think of that,—a man of my kidney,—think of that; that am as ſubject to heat as butter; a man of continual diſſolution and thaw; it was a miracle to 'ſcape ſuffocation. And in the heighth of this bath, when I was more than half-ſtew'd in greaſe, like a Dutch diſh, to be thrown into the Thames, and cool'd, glowing hot, in that ſurge, like a horſe-ſhoe; think of that—hiſſing hot—think of that, maſter Brook.

*For.* In good ſadneſs, ſir, I am ſorry that for my ſake you have ſuffer'd all this. My ſuit then is deſperate; you'll undertake her no more?

*Fal.* Maſter Brook, I will be thrown into Ætna, as I have been into Thames, ere I will leave her thus. Her huſband is this morning gone a birding: I have receiv'd from her another embaſſy of meeting; 'twixt eight and nine is the hour, maſter Brook.

*For.* 'Tis paſt eight already, ſir.

*Fal.* Is it? I will then addreſs me to my appointment. Come to me at your convenient leiſure, and you ſhall know how I ſpeed; and the concluſion ſhall be crown'd with your

enjoying her: Adieu. You ſhall have her, maſter Brook; maſter Brook, you ſhall cuckold Ford.

*Exit* Falſtaff.

*For.* Hum! ha! is this a viſion? is this a dream? do I ſleep? maſter Ford, awake; awake, maſter Ford; there's a hole made in your beſt coat, maſter Ford. This 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have linen, and buck-baſkets!—Well, I will proclaim myſelf what I am: I will now take the lecher; he is at my houſe, he cannot 'ſcape me; 'tis impoſſible he ſhould; he cannot creep into a half-penny purſe, nor into a pepper-box: but, leſt the devil that guides him ſhould aid him, I will ſearch impoſſible places. Though what I am I cannot avoid, yet to be what I would not, ſhall not make me tame: if I have horns to make one mad, let the proverb go with me, I'll be horn-mad.

*Exit.*

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# ACT IV.

## SCENE I.

A ROOM IN FORD'S HOUSE.

*Enter* Falſtaff, *and* Mrs. Ford.

*Fal.* MISTRESS Ford, your ſorrow hath eaten up my ſufferance: I ſee you are obſequious in your love, and I profeſs requital to an hair's breadth; not only, miſtreſs Ford, in the ſimple office of love, but in all the accoutrement, complement, and ceremony of it. But are you ſure of your huſband now?

*Mrs. F.* He's a birding, ſweet ſir John.

Mrs. Page *without.*

*Mrs. P.* What hoa, goſſip Ford! what hoa!

*Mrs. F.* Step into the chamber, ſir John.

*Exit* Falſtaff.

*Enter* Mrs. Page.

*Mrs. P.* How now, ſweetheart? who's at home beſides yourſelf?

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. F.* Why, none but mine own people.

*Mrs. P.* Indeed?

*Mrs. F.* No, certainly—Speak louder.

*Mrs. P.* Truly, I am ſo glad you have nobody here!

*Mrs. F.* Why?

*Mrs. P.* Why, woman, your huſband is in his old lunes again: he ſo takes on yonder with my huſband; ſo rails againſt all married mankind; ſo curſes all Eve's daughters, of what complexion ſoever; and ſo buffets himſelf on the forehead, crying, *Peer-out, peer-out!* that any madneſs I ever yet beheld, ſeem'd but tameneſs, civility, and patience, to this diſtemper he is in now. I am glad the fat knight is not here.

*Mrs. F.* Why, does he talk of him?

*Mrs. P.* Of none but him; and ſwears he was carried out, the laſt time he ſearch'd for him, in a baſket: proteſts to my huſband he is now here: and hath drawn him and the reſt of their company from their ſport, to make another experiment of his ſuſpicion; but I am glad the knight is not here; now he ſhall ſee his own foolery.

*Mrs. F.* I am undone!—the knight is here.

*Mrs. P.* Why, then you are utterly ſham'd, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you!—Away with him, away with him; better ſhame than murder.

*Mrs. F.* Which way ſhould he go? how ſhall I beſtow him? Shall I put him into the baſket again?

*Enter* Falſtaff.

*Fal.* No, I'll come no more i' the baſket: may I not go out ere he come?

*Mrs. P.* Alas! three of maſter Ford's brothers watch the door with piſtols, that none ſhould iſſue out; otherwiſe you might ſlip away ere he came.—But what make you here?

*Fal.* I'll creep up into the chimney.

*Mrs. F.* There they always uſe to diſcharge their birding-pieces: creep into the kiln-hole.

*Fal.* Where is it?

*Mrs. F.* He will ſeek there on my word. Neither preſs, coffer, cheſt, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abſtract for the remembrance of ſuch places, and goes to them by his note: there is no hiding you in the houſe.

*Fal.* I'll go out then.

*Mrs. F.* If you go out in your own ſemblance, you die,

ſir

ſir John, unleſs you go out diſguis'd—How might we diſguiſe him?

*Mrs. P.* Alas the day! I know not. There is no woman's gown big enough for him; otherwiſe, he might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchief, and ſo eſcape.

*Fal.* Good hearts, deviſe ſomething: any extremity, rather than a miſchief.

*Mrs. F.* My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown above.

*Mrs. P.* On my word, it will ſerve him; ſhe's as big as he is: and there's her thrum'd hat, and her muffler too: run up, ſir John.

*Mrs. F.* Go, go, ſweet ſir John; miſtreſs Page, and I, will look ſome linen for your head.

*Mrs. P.* Quick, quick; we'll come dreſs you ſtraight: put on the gown the while. *Exit* Falſtaff.

*Mrs. F.* I would my huſband would meet him in this ſhape; he cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he ſwears ſhe's a witch; forbade her my houſe, and hath threaten'd to beat her.—But is my huſband coming?

*Mrs. P.* Ay, in good ſadneſs is he; and talks of the baſket too, howſoever he hath had intelligence.

*Mrs. F.* We'll try that; for I'll appoint my men to carry the baſket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did laſt time.

*Mrs. P.* Nay, but he'll be here preſently: let's go dreſs him like the witch of Brentford.

*Mrs. F.* I'll firſt direct my men what they ſhall do with the baſket. Go up, I'll bring linen for him ſtraight.

*Exit* Mrs Ford.

*Mrs. P.* Hang him, diſhoneſt varlet! we cannot miſuſe him enough.

We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do,
Wives may be merry, and yet honeſt too:
We do not act, that often jeſt and laugh;
'Tis old, but true, *Still ſwine eat all the draff.*

*Exit* Mrs. Page. *O. J.*

*Enter* Mrs. Ford, *with a kerchief, &c. in her hand,* John, *and* Robert.

*Mrs. F.* Go, ſirs, take the baſket again on your ſhoulders; your maſter is hard at door; if he bid you ſet it down, obey him; quickly, diſpatch. *Exit* Mrs. Ford.

*Joh.*

*Joh.* Come, come, take up.

*Rob.* Pray heaven, it be not full of the knight again.

*Joh.* I hope not.

*Enter* Ford, Shallow, Page, Caius, *and* Evans.

*For.* Ay, but if it prove true, maſter Page, have you any way then to unfool me again?—Set down the baſket, villain:—ſomebody call my wife. *Exit* John. You, youth in a baſket, come out here!—Oh, you panderly raſcals! there's a knot, a ging, a pack, a conſpiracy againſt me:—now ſhall the devil be ſham'd. What! wife, I ſay! come, come forth; behold what honeſt clothes you ſend forth to bleaching.

*Pag.* Why, this paſſes! Maſter Ford, you are not to go looſe any longer; you muſt be pinion'd.

*Eva.* Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog!

*Sha.* Indeed, maſter Ford, this is not well, indeed.

*Enter* John *and* Mrs. Ford.

*For.* So ſay I too, ſir.—Come hither, miſtreſs Ford;—miſtreſs Ford, the honeſt woman, the modeſt wife, the virtuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her huſband!—I ſuſpect without cauſe, miſtreſs, do I?

*Mrs. F.* Heaven be my witneſs, you do, if you ſuſpect me in any diſhoneſty.

*For.* Well ſaid, brazen-face; hold it out.—Come forth, ſirrah. [*Pulls the clothes out of the baſket.*

*Pag.* This paſſes.

*Mrs. F.* Are you not aſham'd? let the clothes alone.

*For.* I ſhall find you anon.

*Eva.* 'Tis unreaſonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? come away.

*For.* Maſter Page, as I am a man, there was one convey'd out of my houſe yeſterday in this baſket. Why may not he be there again? In my houſe I am ſure he is: my intelligence is true; my jealouſy is reaſonable: pluck me out all the linen.

*Mrs. F.* If you find a man there, he ſhall die a flea's death.

*Pag.* Here's no man.

*Sha.* By my fidelity, this is not well, maſter Ford; this wrongs you.

*For.* Well, he's not here I ſeek for.

*Pag.* No, nor no where elſe but in your brain.

*For.* Help to ſearch my houſe this one time: if I find not what I ſeek, ſhew no colour for my extremity, let me for ever be

be your table-ſport; let them ſay of me, As jealous as Ford, that ſearch'd a hollow wall-nut for his wife's leman. Satisfy me once more, once more ſearch with me.

*Exeunt* John *and* Robert, *with the baſket.*

*Mrs. F.* What, hoa, miſtreſs Page! come you, and the old woman down; my huſband will come into the chamber.

*For.* Old woman! what old woman's that?

*Mrs. F.* Why it is my maid's aunt, of Brentford.

*For.* A witch, a queen, an old cozening queen! Have I not forbid her my houſe? She comes of errands, does ſhe? We are ſimple men; we do not know what's brought to paſs under the profeſſion of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by ſpells, by the figure, and ſuch daubery, as this is: beyond our element: we know nothing.——Come down, you witch; you hag you, come down, I ſay.

*Mrs. F.* Nay, good, ſweet huſband;—good gentlemen, let him not ſtrike the old woman.

*Enter* Falſtaff *in Woman's Clothes, led by Mrs.* Page.

*Mrs. P.* Come, mother Prat; come, give me your hand.

*For.* I'll prat her:—Out of my door, you witch! [*Beats him.*] you rag, you baggage, you poulcat, you ronyon! out! out! I'll conjure you! I'll fortune-tell you!

*Exit* Falſtaff.

*Mrs. P.* Are you not aſham'd? I think you have kill'd the poor woman.

*Mrs. F.* Nay, he will do it. 'Tis a goodly credit for you.

*For.* Hang her, witch!

*Eva.* By yea and no, I think the 'oman is a witch indeed. I like not when a 'oman has a great peard; I ſpy a great peard under her muffler.

*For.* Will you follow, gentlemen? I beſeech you, follow; ſee but the iſſue of my jealouſy. If I cry out thus upon no trail, never truſt me when I open again.

*Exit* Ford.

*Pag.* Let's obey his humour a little further. Come, gentlemen. *Exeunt all but Mrs.* Ford *and Mrs.* Page.

*Mrs. P.* Truſt me, he beat him moſt pitifully.

*Mrs. F.* Nay, by the maſs, that he did not; he beat him moſt unpitifully, methought.

*Mrs. P.* I'll have the cudgel hallow'd, and hung o'er the altar; it hath done meritorious ſervice.

*Mr.*

*Mrs F.* What think you? may we, with the warrant of womanhood, and the witneſs of a good conſcience, purſue him with any further revenge?

*Mrs. P.* The ſpirit of wantonneſs is, ſure, ſcar'd out of him.

*Mrs. F.* Shall we tell our huſbands how we have ſerv'd him?

*Mrs. P.* Yes, by all means; if it be but to ſcrape the figures out of your huſband's brains. If they can find in their hearts, the poor unvirtuous fat knight ſhall be any further afflicted, we two will ſtill be the miniſters

*Mrs. F.* I'll warrant, they'll have him publicly ſham'd: and, meth'nks, there would be no period to the jeſt, ſhould he not be publicly ſham'd.

*Mrs P.* Come, to the forge with it then--ſhape it; I would not have things cool. *Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER-INN.

*Enter* Hoſt *and* Fenton.

*Hoſ.* MASTER Fenton, talk not to me.

*Fen.* Yet hear me ſpeak; aſſiſt me in my purpoſe,
And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee
A hundred pound in gold.

*Hoſ.* I will hear you, maſter Fenton.

*Fen.* From time to time I have acquainted you
With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page,
Who mutually hath anſwered my affection;—
Now here it reſts, that you'll procure the vicar
To ſtay for us at Church, 'twixt twelve and one,
To-night, and, in the name of marrying,
To give our hearts united ceremony.

*Hoſ.* Well, I'll to the vicar;
Bring you the maid, you ſhall not lack a prieſt.

*Fen.* So ſhall I evermore be bound to thee.

*Exeunt.*

## SCENE III.

A ROOM IN FORD'S HOUSE.

*Enter* Page, Ford, Mrs. Page, Mrs. Ford, *and* Evans.

*Eva.* 'TIS one of the beſt diſcretions of a 'oman as ever I did look upon.

*Pag.* And did he ſend you both theſe letters at an inſtant?

*Mrs. P.* Within a quarter of an hour.

*For.* Pardon me, wife: henceforth do what thou wilt;
I rather will ſuſpect the ſun with cold,
Than thee with wantonneſs: now doth thy honour ſtand,
In him that was of late an heretic,
As firm as faith.

*Pag.* 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more;
But let our plot go forward: let our wives
Yet once again, to make us public ſport,
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,
Where we may take him, and diſgrace him for it.

*For.* There is no better way than that they ſpoke of.

*Pag* How! to ſend him word, they'll meet him in the park at midnight! fie, fie; he'll never come.

*Eva.* You ſay, he has been thrown in the rivers; and has been grievouſly peaten, as an old 'oman: methinks, there ſhould be terrors in him, that he ſhould not come; methinks, his fleſh is puniſh'd, he ſhall have no deſires.

*Pag.* So think I too.

*Mrs. F.* Deviſe but how you'll uſe him when he comes,
And let us two deviſe to bring him hither.

*Mrs. P.* There is an old tale goes, that Herne the hunter,
Sometime a keeper here in Windſor foreſt,
Doth all the winter time, at ſtill midnight,
Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns;
And makes milch-kine yield blood, and ſhakes a chain
In a moſt hideous and dreadful manner:
You have heard of ſuch a ſpirit; and, well you know,
The ſuperſtitious idle-headed eld
Receiv'd, and did deliver to our age,
This tale of Herne, the hunter, for a truth.

*Pag.* Why, yet there want not many, that do fear

In

In deep of night to walk by this Hernes's oak?
But what of this?

*Mrs. F.* Marry, this is our device;——
That Falſtaff at that oak ſhall meet with us,
Diſguis'd like Herne, with huge horns on his head.

*Pag.* Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come,
And in this ſhape: when you have brought him thither,
What ſhall be done with him? what is your plot?

*Mrs. P.* That likewiſe have we thought upon; come, come,
Let us about it.

*Eva.* It is admirable pleaſures, and fery honeſt knaveries.

*All.* come, come. *Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV.

A ROOM IN THE GARTER INN.

*Enter* Hoſt *and* Simple.

*Hoſ* WHAT would'ſt thou have, boor? what, thick-ſkin? ſpeak, breathe, diſcuſs; brief, ſhort, quick, ſnap.

*Sim.* Marry, ſir, I come to ſpeak with ſir John Falſtaff from maſter Slender.

*Hoſ.* There's his chamber, his houſe, his caſtle, his ſtanding-bed, and truckle-bed; 'tis painted about with the ſtory of the prodigal, freſh and new: go, knock and call; he'll ſpeak like an *Anthropophaginian* unto thee: knock, I ſay.

*Sim.* There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone up into his chamber; I'll be ſo bold as ſtay, ſir, 'till ſhe come down: I come to ſpeak with her, indeed.

*Hoſ.* Ha! a fat woman! the knight may be robb'd; I'll call.——Bully knight! Bully ſir John! ſpeak from thy lung military: art thou there? it is thine hoſt, thine Epheſian, calls

Falſtaff *within.*

*Fal.* How now, mine hoſt?

*Hoſ.* Here's a Bohemian-Tartar tarries the coming down of thy fat woman: let her deſcend, bully, let her deſcend; my chambers are honourable: fie! privacy? fie!

*Enter* Falſtaff

*Fal* There was, mine hoſt, an old fat woman even now with me; but ſhe's gone.

*Sim.* Pray you, ſir, was't not the wiſe woman of Brentford?

*Fal.* Ay, marry was it muſcle-ſhell: what would you with her?

*Sim.* My maſter, ſir, maſter Slender, ſent to her, ſeeing her go through the ſtreets, to know, ſir, whether one Nym, ſir, that beguil'd him of a chain, had the chain, or no.

*Fal.* I ſpake with the old woman about it.

*Sim.* And what ſays ſhe, I pray, ſir?

*Fal.* Marry, ſhe ſays, that the very ſame man, that beguil'd maſter Slender of his chain, cozen'd him of it.

*Sim.* I would, I could have ſpoken with the woman herſelf! I had other things to have ſpoken with her too, from him.

*Fal.* What are they? let us know.

*Hoſ.* Ay, come; quick.

*Sim.* I may not conceal them, ſir.

*Fal.* Conceal them, or thou dy'ſt.

*Sim.* Why, ſir, they were nothing but about miſtreſs Anne Page; to know, if it were my maſter's fortune to have her, or no.

*Fal.* 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

*Sim.* What, ſir?

*Fal.* To have her—or no: go; ſay, the woman told me ſo.

*Sim* May I be ſo bold to ſay ſo, ſir?

*Fal.* Ay, ſir Tike; who more bold?

*Sim.* I thank your worſhip: I ſhall make my maſter glad with theſe tidings. *Exit* Simple.

*Hoſ.* Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly, ſir John: was there a wiſe woman with thee?

*Fal.* Ay, that there was, mine hoſt; one, that hath taught me more wit than ever I learn'd before in my life: and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

*Exit* Hoſt.

If it ſhould come to the ear of the court, how I have been transform'd, and how my transformation hath been waſh'd and cudgel'd, they would melt me out of my fat, drop by drop, and liquor fiſhermen's boots with me; I warrant, they would whip me with their fine wits, till I were as creſt-faln as a dry'd pear. I never proſper'd ſince I forſwore myſelf at *Primero*. Well,

Well, if my wind were but long enough to ſay my prayers, I would repent.——

*Enter* Mrs. Quickly.

Now! whence come you?

*Qui.* From the two parties, forſooth.

*Fal.* The devil take one party, and his dam the other, and ſo they ſhall be both beſtow'd! I have ſuffer'd more for their ſakes, more, than the villainous inconſtancy of man's diſpoſition is able to bear.

*Qui.* And have not they ſuffer'd? yes, I warrant; ſpeciouſly one of them; miſtreſs Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot ſee a white ſpot about her.

*Fal.* What tell'ſt thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myſelf into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford; but that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of a wood woman, deliver'd me, the knave conſtable had ſet me i' the ſtocks, i' the common ſtocks for a witch.

*Qui.* Sir, let me ſpeak, and you ſhall hear how things go; and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will ſay ſomewhat. Good hearts, what ado is here to bring you together! ſure, one of you does not ſerve heaven well, that you are ſo croſs'd.

*Fal.* Pr'ythee, no more prattling;—go.—I'll hold: this is the third time; I hope, good luck lies in odd numbers. Away.

*Qui.* I'll provide you a chain; and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

*Fal.* Away, I ſay; time wears: hold up your head, and mince. *Exeunt.*

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# ACT V.

## SCENE I.

WINDSOR PARK.

*Enter* Page, Shallow, *and* Slender.

*Pag.* COME, come; we'll couch i' the caſtle-ditch, till we ſee the light of our fairies.—Remember, ſon Slender, my daughter.

*Sle.*

*Sle.* Ay, forſooth; I have ſpoke with her, and we have a nay-word, how to know one another. I come to her in white, and cry, *mum*; ſhe cries, *budget*; and by that we know one another.

*Sha.* That's good too: but what needs either your *mum*, or her *budget?* the white will decipher her well enough.

*Pag.* The night is dark; light and ſpirits will become it well. No man means evil but the devil, and we ſhall know him by his horns. Let's away; follow me.

*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

A STREET IN WINDSOR.

*Enter* Mrs. Page, Mrs. Ford, *and* Caius.

*Mrs. P.* MASTER doctor, my daughter is in green; when you ſee your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and diſpatch it quickly: go before into the park; we two muſt go together.

*Caius.* I know vat I have to do: adieu.

*Exit* Caius.

*Mrs. P.* Fare you well, ſir. My huſband will not rejoice ſo much at the abuſe of Falſtaff, as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter: but 'tis no matter; better a little chiding, than a great deal of heart-break.

*Mrs. F.* Where is Nan now, and her troop of fairies? and the Welch devil, Hugh?

*Mrs P.* They are all couch'd in a pit hard by Herne's oak, with obſcur'd lights; which, at the very inſtant of Falſtaff's and our meeting, they will at once diſplay to the night.

*Mrs. F.* That cannot chuſe but amaze him.

*Mrs. P.* If he be not amaz'd, he will be mock'd; if he be amaz'd, he will every way be mock'd.

*Mrs. F.* We'll betray him finely.

*Mrs. P.* Againſt ſuch lewdſters, thoſe that betray them do no treachery.

*Mrs. F.* The hour draws on; to the oak! to the oak!

*Exeunt.*

SCENE

## SCENE III.

WINDSOR PARK.

*Enter* Evans, *and others dreſs'd like Fairies, with Tapers.*

*Eva.* TRIB, trib, fairies; come; and remember your parts: be pold, I pray you; follow me into the pit; and when I give the watch-'ords, do as I pid you: come, come; trib, trib. *Exeunt.*

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## SCENE IV.

ANOTHER PART OF THE PARK.

A CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE.

*Enter* Falſtaff *diſguis'd, with a Buck's Head on, ſhaking a chain.*

*Fal.* THE Windſor bell hath ſtruck twelve; the minute draws on: now the hot-blooded gods aſſiſt me!—I am here a Windſor ſtag; and the fatteſt, I think, i' the foreſt: Who comes here? my doe?

*Enter* Mrs. Ford *and* Mrs. Page.

*Mrs F.* Sir John? art thou there, my deer?

*Fal.* Let the ſky rain potatoes; let it thunder to the tune of *Green Sleeves*; hail kiſſing-comfits, and ſnow eringoes; let there come a tempeſt of provocation, I will ſhelter me here.

*Mrs. F.* Miſtreſs Page is come with me, ſweetheart.

*Fal.* Divide me like a bribe-buck, each a haunch! I will keep my ſides to myſelf, my ſhoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath your huſbands. Am I a woodman? ha! Speak I like Herne the hunter?—Why, now is Cupid a child of conſcience: he makes reſtitution. As I am a true ſpirit, welcome!

*Noiſe by the Fairies within.*

*Mrs P.* Alas! what noiſe?

*Mrs. F.* Heaven forgive our ſins!

*Mrs.*

*Fal.* What ſhould this be?

*Mrs. F.* } Away, away.
*Mrs. P.* }

*Exeunt* Mrs. Ford *and* Mrs. Page.

*Enter* Evans, *and others dreſs'd like fairies with tapers.*

*Fal.* They are fairies; he that ſpeaks to them ſhall die;
I'll wink and couch; no man their works muſt eye.
[*Lies down upon his face.*

*Eva.* Our dance of cuſtom, round about the oak
Of Herne the Hunter, let us not forget.
Pray you, lock hand in hand; yourſelves in order ſet:——
But, ſtay; I ſmell a man of middle earth.

*Fal.* Heavens defend me from that Welch fairy! leſt he transform me to a piece of cheeſe!

*All the Fairies ſpeak.*

Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,
'Till candles, and ſtar-light, and moon-light be out.

*During this rhime they pinch him.—A noiſe of hunting is made within. All the fairies, except* Evans, *run away.* Falſtaff *pulls off his buck's head, and riſes.*

*Enter* Mr. Ford, Mr. Page, Mrs. Ford, *and* Mrs. Page.

*Pag.* Nay, do not fly: I think we have watch'd you now;
Will none but Herne the hunter ſerve your turn?

*Mrs. P.* Now, good ſir John, how like you Windſor wives?
See you theſe, huſband? do not theſe fair yokes
Become the foreſt better than the town?

*For.* Now, ſir, who's a cuckold now?—Maſter Brook, Falſtaff's a knave, a cuckoldly knave; here are his horns, maſter Brook: and, maſter Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-baſket, his cudgel, and twenty pounds of money, which muſt be paid to maſter Brook; his horſes are arreſted for it, maſter Brook.

*Mrs. F.* Sir John, we have had ill luck; we could never meet. I will never take you for my love again, but I will always count you my deer.

*Fal.* I do begin to perceive, that I am made an aſs.

*For.* Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

*Fal.*

*Fal.* And theſe are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought, they were not fairies; and yet the guiltineſs of my mind, the ſudden ſurpriſe of my powers, drove the groſſneſs of the foppery into a receiv'd belief, that they were fairies. See now, how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment!

*Eva.* Sir John Falſtaff, ſerve Heaven, and leave your deſires, and fairies will not pince you.

*For.* Well ſaid, fairy Hugh.

*Eva.* And leave you your jealouſies too, I pray you.

*For.* I will never miſtruſt my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good Engliſh.

*Fal.* Have I laid my brain in the ſun, and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent ſo groſs o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welch goat too? 'tis time I were chok'd with a piece of toaſted cheeſe.

*Eva.* Seeſe is not good to give putter; your pelly is all putter.

*Fal.* Seeſe and putter! have I liv'd to ſtand the taunt of one that makes fritters of Engliſh?

*Mrs. P.* Why, ſir John, do you think, though we would have thruſt virtue out of our hearts by the head and ſhoulders, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

*For.* What, a hodge-pudding? a bag of flax?

*Mrs. F.* A puff'd man?

*Pag.* Old, cold, witherd'd, and of intolerable entrails?

*For* And one that is as ſlanderous as Satan?

*Pag.* And as poor as Job?

*For.* And as wicked as his wife?

*Eva.* And given to fornications, and to taverns, and ſack, and wine, and metheglins, and to drinkings, and to ſwearings, and ſtarings, pribbles and prabbles?

*Fal.* Well, I am your theme; you have the ſtart of me; I am dejected; I am not able to anſwer the Welch flannel; ignorance itſelf is a plummet o'er me: uſe me as you will.

*For.* Marry, ſir, we'll bring you to Windſor, to one maſter Brook, that you have cozen'd of money, to whom you ſhould have been a pandar: over and above that you have ſuffer'd: I think, to repay that money, will be a biting affliction.

*Mrs F.* Nay, huſband, let that go to make amends: forgive that ſum, and ſo we'll all be friends.

*For.* Well, here's my hand; all's forgiven at laſt

*Pag.* Yet be cheerful, knight: thou ſhalt eat a poſſet to-night at my houſe; where I will deſire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee: tell her, maſter Slender hath married her daughter.

*Mrs. P.* Doctors doubt that; if Anne Page be my daughter, ſhe is, by this, doctor Caius' wife.

*Enter* Slender.

*Sle.* Whoo, ho! ho! father Page!

*Pag.* Son! how now? how now, ſon? have you diſpatch'd?

*Sle.* Diſpatch'd—I'll make the beſt in Glouceſterſhire know on't; would I were hang'd, la, elſe.

*Pag.* Of what, ſon?

*Sle.* I came yonder at Eton to marry miſtreſs Anne Page, and ſhe's a great lubberly boy: if it had not been i' the church, I would have ſwing'd him, or he ſhould have ſwing'd me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I never ſtir, and 'tis a poſt-maſter's boy.

*Pag.* Upon my life then you took the wrong.

*Sle.* What need you tell me that? I think ſo, when I took a boy for a girl: if I had been married to him, for all he was in womans's apparel, I would not have had him.

*Pag.* Why, this is your own folly; did I not tell you how you ſhould know my daughter by her garments?

*Sle.* I went to her in white, and cry'd *mum*, and ſhe cry'd *budget*, as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a poſt-maſter's boy.

*Exit* Slender.

*Mrs. P.* Good George, be not angry: I knew of your purpoſe; turn'd my daughter into green; and, indeed, ſhe is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

*Enter* Caius.

*Cai.* Vere is miſtreſs Page? By gar, I am cozen'd; I ha' married *un garçon*, a boy; *un paiſan*, by gar, a boy; it is not Anne Page: by gar, I am cozen'd.

*Mrs. P.* Why, did you take her in green?

*Cai.* Ay, be gar, and 'tis a boy: be gar, I'll raiſe all Windſor. *Exit* Caius.

*Eva.* Maſter doctor, cannot you ſee, put marry poys?

*For.* This is ſtrange: who hath got the right Anne?

*Pag.* My heart miſgives me: here comes maſter Fenton.

*Enter*

*Enter* Fenton *and* Anne Page.

How now, maſter Fenton?

*Ann.* Pardon, good father! good my mother, pardon!

*Pag.* Now, miſtreſs? how chance you went not with maſter Slender?

*Mrs. P.* Why went you not with maſter doctor, maid?

*Fen.* You do amaze her: hear the truth of it.
You would have married her moſt ſhamefully,
Where there was no proportion held in love.
The truth is, ſhe and I, long ſince contracted,
Are now ſo ſure, that nothing can diſſolve us.
The offence is holy that ſhe hath committed;
Since therein ſhe doth evitate and ſhun
A thouſand irreligious curſed hours,
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

*For.* Stand not amaz'd: here is no remedy:——
In love, the heavens themſelves do guide the ſtate;
Money buys lands, and wives are ſold by fate.

*Fal.* I am glad, though you have ta'en a ſpecial ſtand to ſtrike at me, that your arrow hath glanc'd.

*Pag.* Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give thee joy!
What cannot be eſchew'd, muſt be embrac'd.

*Fal.* When night-dogs run, all ſorts of deer are chas'd.

*Eva.* I will dance, and eat plums, at your wedding.

*Mrs. P.* Well, I will muſe no further:—Maſter Fenton,
Heaven give you many, many merry days!——
Good huſband, let us every one go home,
And laugh this ſport o'er by a country fire;
Sir John and all.

*For.* Let it be ſo:——Sir John,
To maſter Brook you yet ſhall hold your word;
For he, to-night, ſhall lie with miſtreſs Ford.

*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.